

# BELIEVERS

*Priviledges and Duties,*

And the Exercise of Communicants,  
holden forth, in several

## SERMONS:

Preached on diverse Texts and at  
several occasions.

By the Learned, Pious, and Laborious Servant,  
of **JESUS CHRIST.**

Mr. ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN,  
First Minister of the Gospel at  
*Forgan in Fife; and thereafter*  
*at Kilmarnock in the West.*

---

Part First.

---

1 Tim. 4. 7. *Exercise thy self unto Godliness.*  
Heb. 11. 4. *He being dead yet speaketh.*

---



G L A S G O W.

Printed by ROBERT SANDERS, one  
of His MAJESTIES Printers. 1683.

GLASGOW  
UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY



# TO THE READER.

Christian Reader.

**T**HIS ensuing Piece containeth some Sermon, Preached upon diverse special occasions, by the Laborious and worthy Servant of Christ Mr. Wedderburn. The good Providence, which offereth them to thy Christian perusal, is much to be adored, putting so sweet and useful a piece into thy hand, in a time of so much distraction and distemper; wherein others, in stead of bread, gave the children stones and by perplexing debates and thornie contentions, does rather A. vocat and Divert the Christian from, than further him in, his soules edification. The Reverend author, albeit eminently indued with a singular Facultie for discussing contr. vrsies (wherewith his time abounded,) yet much more delighted in practical and case divinity as the sweeter, and nobler Exercise of a Man of God and more suitable to the sweetness of his spirit, and more profitable to the Church and people of the Lord. And in this he did excell, having the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season both to the very and secure. His lips did feed many and his Doctrine drop like the Dew, to water the withered, revive and refresh the heavy and languishing soul, and make the wilderness blossom. An little ensample whereof, these few Sermons gives you.

To the Reader.

*He needs no Elegie, especially from so mean a hand as mine. His praise is in the Churches, and his Memorie blessed, His Name fragrant, and the Fruits of his Labours witnessing for him, among the People over whom the Lord did set him. His Epistle Commendatorie is largely written in the hearts of many in Forgan, and the parts adjacent, where he first served in the Gospel, and had a most succesful Ministry, both for Conversion and Edification. Many a blessed Communion, and excellent dayes of the Son of Man, did God honour him with there: and scarce have I seen a sweeter face of a Congregation, then that in Forgan used to be: his Auditorie was usually dismissed with another stamp, then they came, such a power and blessing did ordinarily attend his preaching. Nor was he at Kilmarnock without a remarkable Seal of his Ministry, though in a time of General Desertedness and upstirring among People; so rich a blessing did follow and accompany; whereever the Master did send him, and this, even to the Conviction of many, who were carried away with the Contradiction of these reeling times.*

*But having served his Generation by the will of God, with whom he walked and kepted intercourse in his Life, and Wrestled and prevailed like a Prince, as one of the Seed of Jacob, a considerable time before his Death, he there fell asleep and now rests from his Labours, and this piece of his Works follow him.*

*Being dead, he yet speaketh thereby; and it is hoped, serious and sober People will not want an Ear to hear.*

*Doubtlesse these Sermons will be very accepta<sup>ble</sup>*

To the Reader.

to many in Fite, who were wont to think it edifying to have the least of privat Converse with such a Spiritual and Savory Servant of Jesus, and to be refreshed even to see his face in a Pulpit.

Had he lived to have polished them for the Press they might have come forth to publick, more accurat and in a finer dress, yet as they are, you will find them precious, material, and of singular use for promoting the power of Piety.

And though a Posthumous work, (pub'lished by his hopeful Son, who not willing to detain such a Talent hid by him, letteth thee now have it for publick use) no more needs be said to recommend it to thy serious perusal, but to tell thee; they are Sermons of Learned and Holy Mr. Wedderburn. Which if they get a favourable Entertainment, and be well improven to thy Edification; more may follow; notwithstanding the Discouragements of this Iron-age.

It remains then, that you read and ponder them: and by Meditation and Prayers work them upon thy heart. There can be no better Fence against Popery, and other Evils of the Time, than to become serious Christians, and grow in Grace and Communion with blessed Jesus, 2 Pet. 3. 17. 18.

Is it not Formality in Religion, living strangers to the Power and Exercise of Godliness, that provokes the Lord to let loose Delusions on many? 2 Thess. 2. 10. 11.

Want of Real Christianity under a Protestant Profession. Paves the way for Antichrists reentry. Rev. 13. 3. 8. Matth. 12. 43, 44, 45. Those who are only of the outer court, are a ready  
A 3 prey.

To the Reader.

*prey to the Romish bewitcheries, easily captiv<sup>ed</sup>  
and brought into bondage, when the wind blowes  
from that airth, Rev. 11. 2.*

*Let Religion therefore, in the power of it, go to  
thy Heart, and Grace will stablisk you in the  
Truth, when National light will not hold out a-  
gainst Batteries but be easily overborn by Tentati-  
on and Carnal Interest, when the hour, and power  
of Darkness comes.*

*Now, to help you in this, is the purpose of these  
Sermons: The same Spirit and blessing, which  
wont to be with the Preaching, be with your Read-  
ing thereof, and make it prosperous for this blessed  
end.*

This is the cordial wish of  
Thine in the Lord Jesus,

J. B.

# S E R M O N

On Rom. 2. 22.

*Thou that sayest, thou shalt not commit adultery, does thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest Idols, does thou commit Sacrilege?*

FROM the 17. Verse of this Chapter the Apostle is confuting, a received opinion amongst the Jews of his time, that they should be justified by the knowledge of the Law, and their being able to instruct others out of it. The Apostle supposes all along their light to be so great as to approve the things that are most excellent, yea, and that they are able to teach others. But since they practised not answerable to their knowledge, the Apostle finds in their condition rather matter for accusation than justification, *thou that teaches another teachest thou not thy self?* In the preceeding verse, which is amplified in this verse, *thou that sayest thou shalt not commit adultery.* The Apostle's scope then in the words is to shew them, that their knowledge and profession would profite them little, so long as their conversation and way was so unfuteable to it; and in the Apostle's argument to evince this, we have a concession and a correction; the concession, the Apostle supposes them to have in reference to adultery and idolatry not only an outward profession of averfnefs from them, but an inward antipathy against them; they not only said a man

A 4

should

should not commit adultery, but inwardly they abhorred Idols; the word in the Greek language βδελυσσμεν from βδελυσσμαι, it signifies properly to hate a thing for the filthy smell it hath; so specious a profession had they against adultery, and such an abhorrency of the Idolatry of the Heathen, that they said a man should not commit adultery and they abhorred Idols.

The correction contains, as Interpreters generally observe, an aggravation of the guiltiness of their practice from the concession, *does thou commit*? the proponing by way of question is very emphatick, as if it were so absurd for them that said so much, that positively he will not assert it.

Some move a question why the Apostle changes the word Idolatry into Sacrilege? He sayes not thou that abhorrest Idols, does thou commit Idolatry, but Sacrilege ( I purpose not in this Sermon to search into the name of the things mentioned in the verse, Adultery, Idolatry and Sacrilege, only to the question, some say the change is only in words not of things, for Idolatry is an eminent kind of Sacrilege, in regard it robs God of the worship instituted by himself, and gives unto an Idol false worship. Others think the kind of sin is varied indeed, and which is most probable, the change having a special Emphasis in it, the Apostle by it saying this much to them, that though they abhorred some kind of sin, such as Pagan idolatry, yet they practised of another kind no less dishonourable to God, and dangerous to themselves. I shall say no more  
for

for opening the meaning and scope of the words. There is only one observation from them I purpose in this Sermon to insist upon, but shall name two or three arising from them, ere we come to it.

## OBSERVATION I.

*That the bare knowledge and profession of divine truths without an answerable conversation to them can profite nothing before God.*

**T**Hough knowledge, in excellency, be a qualification next unto grace, yet where separate from practice, it produces only a being beaten with many stripes, yea, to own a profession of Holiness without the practice, like to some Change-houses where ye shall find a sign of an Angel before the door, and nothing within but rioting & drunkenness. This is but from our profession to agree the guilt of our conversation. If any by the present occasion here get no more but the naked knowledge of somewhat they knew not before, and do not bring it home to practice, has but coled the candle to let them see better to the chambers of hell: no that ye are to despise knowledge, much affection & zeal many have without this is like to one who hath two strong legs for an journey, and withal two blind eyes: Especially it is requisite in a time wherein so many deluded with error, and wherein we are called out to give a reason of the hope that is in us.

## OBS. 2.

*That one may have not only an outward profession of holiness, but also some inward work on the affecti-*



ons and yet be in a very dangerous estate before God. So these Jews, they not only said, but they abhorred Idols.

**W**Hat a length an Hypocrite may go at a like occasion to this, we did lately handle, only now learn, not only not to glory in a profession as I fear some among you do; ye know what he was who said, *Come see my zeal for the Lord*. Beware of glorying of this, our rest not, Even upon somewhat beyond some inward work amongst the affections: thou may taste even of the powers of the life to come as the Author to the Hebrews, *Heb. 6.* testifies, and yet want the thing that must accompany Salvation.

## O B S. 3.

*That some may be abhorring evils of some kinds, and yet wallowing in others no less dangerous nor dishonourable to God.*

**T**HEY abhorred Idols, but committed Sacrilege. The Jews were so punctual observers of the Sabbath day, that they will not suffer the bodies to hing on the cross: *John 19. 31, Because of the Sabbath day*. But they stood not upon the Murder of Him, whom even *Pilate* judged an Innocent. Here is great need of Watchfulness, while our Zeal runs out against evils of our Neighbours, we be not intertaining worse in our selves, often it is but an Imaginarie Evil, we condemn in others, while real ones are fostered in our own bosome, *Math. 23.* *Pariseris* tells us of a Bishop of *Cremona*, who was sent Legat from *Rome* to *England*, and in a Synod at *London* enveyed, exceedingly against the



the married Clergy, often saying it was an  
 shame for a man to rise from the side of an  
 Whore and consecrate the Body of Christ, and  
 the same night he was taken in Bed with an  
 Whore himself. It is true, perfit cleansing,  
 though it be commanded, yet it is no where  
 promised, nor can it be expected here, yet  
 how dreadful is it to be wallowing in things  
 worse or as evil as that we condemn in others.  
 How many seem to close out that thief at the  
 door which by the window comes in & Robs  
 them. While thou condemns the adultery,  
 drunkenness, swearing, of others, ( which is  
 thy duty, ) watch lest thou be guilty of the hy-  
 pocritie, earthly mindedness, that abounds in  
 others. If thou shalt say, this is even the thing  
 the openly flagitious tells us when we reprove  
 their sins, that we are Hypocrites. But how sin-  
 fully soever they act in reproaching thee, thou  
 oughtest do with their charge as *Moses* did  
*Exod. 3.* With the Railling of the *Hebrews*,  
 who told him, *who made thee a judge, wilt thou*  
*kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian*: *Moses* goes  
 not to revile him again, but searches what  
 good use he may make of it. surely, sayeth he,  
*this thing is known and he flies to Midian.* Do  
 thou so with their reproaches, search if there  
 be not some truth in the thing, and flee to a  
 place of refuge. But I come to that observati-  
 on I purpose to insist on, and which is the chief  
 scope of the *Verse*.

## O B S. IV.

*That it is a great aggravation of the guiltiness of our  
 lives and conversations, when our acknowledged*  
*and*

*and professed principles may be brought as a witness against them.*

**T**Hus here the Apostle aggregates the Guilt of their committing of adultery from this, *thou sayest, thou shalt not commit adultery*, this being the scop of the *Verse*, we shall insist upon it. First, prove it from Scripture: then give some grounds of it, and so apply it.

The truth of the point is evident from Scripture, two instances we shall give in the Old Testament, and two in the New.

**CVI. Psalm**, the scop of which *Psalm* is to exaggerat the guiltinels of *Israel* when in their passage thorow the wilderness, *they tempted God, and lusted in the wilderness*, and all aggravated from this, viz, that at their passage thorow the red Sea *they believed God and sang his praise*: and if you will look to the song they sung *Exod. 15. 11. Who is God save the Lord*, say they, *who is like unto the Lord among the Gods?* who is like, say they, and yet in that *Psalm* *vers. 20. They changed their glory into the similitude of an Oxe*: that they should say, who is like unto the Lord among the gods; and yet change the Lord.

Thus *Nathan* aggravats *David's* guilt in his murder of *Urijah*. **2. Sam. 12.** First, gets him to confess this principle, that the rich man who had wronged the poor of his one little lamb deserved to die; *David's* sin was contrair to the principle he himself had laid, and from this *Nathan* aggravats it.

The like in the New Testament, the Pharisees laid this for a principle, that *Moses* and  
the

the Prophets should be believed, and Christ frequently aggravats the guilt of their dispising him, and from this very principle. So **Peter** aggravats the sin of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, calling it *a lying to the Holy Ghost*, they laid this principle, that it was good to sell their goods and lay them down at the Apostles feet, and yet kept back a part; had they never laid such a ground it had not been a lying to the Holy Ghost. Many such instances we might bring to confirm the truth of the point, and there be these things which tend further to confirm it.

**I.** To sin against professed principles hath in it all the aggravations that a sin against knowledge hath; for to profess and acknowledge any thing for a principle, necessarily supposes the knowledge of it, now sins against knowledge are by some well resembled to cloath which hath an scarlet dy upon it, it is the same sin another commits, but in the ignorant, it is of an white colour, in comparison of what it is when committed against knowledge; there are two great aggravations sins against knowledge have in them, first, there must be a predominant love to the sin, and hatred to its contrary. Though affections are not the guide of the mind, yet they often bind it, and it is from them men act contrary to known truth. *John 15.* towards the close, *but now they have both hated me and my father.* Hated me, why more now, then before? see the reason why it must be hatred of me, *If I had not come and spoken to them.* Christ had convinced their un-

derstand

derstanding, and yet they imbrace him not: this must proceed his hatred. 2dly. Sins against knowledge, their greatness appears in this, that they are not so easily pardoned, as sins donè ignorantly, as Pauls persecuting the Church, which he did ignorantly, had he done it after he had changed his principles, he had not so easily obtained mercy.

Secondly to sin against professed principles will make heathens in their religions to witness against us, often the Lord aggravates Israels sin from the practice of the heathen, *have any of the nations changed their God?* If we should look through all Religions, whereof Histories are full, we shall find the fondest and foolishhest careful to come up to their principle, the *Romans* abounded in sacrifices because the principle they had drunk in from *Numa Pompilius* taught them so. The *Lacedemonians* were famous for the like strict contormity to their principles and lawes. Specially the *Lacedemonians* were famous for abstinence because *Lycurgus* laws, which were their professed principles, led them to it. *Accosta* the Jesuit, in his India History, tells us, that among them the most tender-hearted Mothers would cut the throats of their own children, because their Idolatrous principle led them to such sacrifices; Do not *Mahumitans* abstain from Wine, *Papists* undergoe the most painful peregrinations and scourgings, in Imitation of Saints dayes, and all that they may not contradict their principles. Now all this witness against us when our professed principles contradict our way.

3. To contradict our professed principles makes a man a witness against himself, The man who had the one talent is at a great disadvantage when his judge tells him, *from thy own mouth I condemn thee*. He had said his principle that his Lord was an hard man & repaid where he did not sow, *thou oughtest therefore, sayes his Lord, have put my money to the exchangers*. This stops a mans mouth at first and makes him utterly unexcusable, when his professed principles depons against his practice, *Rom. 2. 1.*

4. To sin against acknowledged principles supposing the principles to be divine, is the highest contempt of God that can be, so *Psal. 50. Consider this ye that forget God, least I arise and tear you in pieces: forget God, who are there? See them in the preceeding part of the Psalm. Ye who take my Covenant in your mouth, and yet when ye see a thief, rune with him, and become partner with the vile adulterer*. They professed his Covenant, and practised adultery, and such are called forgetters of God, and such he will arise and tear in pieces, when there shall be none to deliver. To sin against acknowledged principles, hath in it a despyting of the Law; and he that despiseth the law, sayeth *Isaiah*, despiseth the law-giver.

5. To sin against acknowledged principles; hath affinity to the sins of those who are most signally marked for sin in the Scriptures. Saul professed with tears, *David* was Innocent, and more righteous then he, & professed he knew the Lord would make him King in his stead; yet we find him shortly in armes against him.

*Judas*

*Judas* knew Christ an Innocent, and called him Matter, and yet betrayed him. *Pilat* declared him an Innocent, and yet delivered him to be crucified. It evidenceth the rage and dominion of any lust in the heart, when the accomplishment of it is driven over our very light, like *Saul* to make a law to expell all Witthes out of Israel, and yet himself to seek to one, it evidences indeed the Lord had departed from him.

All these and many more might be brought to evidence the truth of the point, that to sin against acknowledged divine principles, is an great aggravation of our Guiltiness.

*Application.*

There is only one use of this I shall insist upon, it serves for humilliatione and convictione of such as contradist in their practice, their professed principles; it is a sad complaint the Lord hath of *Israel*, *Jer. 2. 10, 11. Pass over to the Isles of Chittim and see ----- if there hath been done such a thing as this; hath a nation changed their Gods, &c. But my people hath changed their glory for that which doth not profit.* Heathens follow their acknowledged principles, and are ours any worse, or any thing more questionable then theirs? But that this point may be the more pressing, I shall not insist in opening the contradiction of the principles, which even by the light of nature heathens have been taught to lay, which multitudes in their lives full of adultery, drunkenness, swearing, lying, make; But there are these four things, which by the Scriptures we are taught to lay for principles, and let us enquire a little how they are contradicted in our lives.

1. It is a principle in our religion, that the great happiness of the creature stands in communion and fellowship with the Creator, *Philosophers* have wandred indeed so in the search of mans chief good, that some have reckoned up some hundreth of opinions about it. But there is none among us who can answer but the first question of our common Catechisme, which is the chief end of man? but can tell, it is to glorifie God and enjoy him; now if thou believest this for a principle and proposes it in the very entrie of thy Catechisme, I shall say to thee, as *Samuel* did to *Saul*, when *Saul* told him he had fulfilled the command of the Lord against *Amaleck*, *what meaneth then*, (said *Samuel*,) *the Bleating of these sheep*? If thou take this for a principle, what meaneth, First, thy contentedness without communion with him, not counting the want of it thy affliction and cross? what account of his going and coming in his ordinances? can it be thy chief happiness, & yet thou content without it? Secondly, what meaneth so many steps of darkness in thy conversation, by which thou art incapacitat for communion with him? *If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness*, we deceive our selves, Sayes the Apostle *John*; if we indeed believe this to be our chief happiness, would there not be more care to be kept in frame to intertain it, then there is? May I not then say to thee, as the Apostle here to the Jewes *Thou that sayes mans chief end is to enjoy God dare thou walk in darkness*, and art thou contented without it?

A Second



A Second principle we all lay in our religion is, that there is an absolute necessity of the practice of Holiness, in order to our attaining glory, without it, we all profess we believe none can see God, what ever difference there be in the Christian Church about the nature of Holiness, yet that there is an absolute necessity about the practice of it, is a thing wherein *Papists, Socinians, Arminians, Lutherians, Antinomians, and Anabaptists*, and all unit. Now let us see how this principle is contradicted. 1. How exceeding little of that wherein the life and power of it consists! mortification, the exercises of faith, love, delight in God, and such like! possibly some care of some duties of the second table, which being rightly performed are acts of obedience to God, but the far greater things neglected! many in these be like a servant who being commanded by his master to sweep the house and look to his child, is carefull to sweep the house, but lets the child fall in the fire: how would the master look on such a servant his obedience? That is the case with many. Beside *Secondly*, what a great deal of Antipathie, with the followers of holiness! Many amongst us are like to some who have such an Antipathie with some meat that not only they cannot eat of it themselves, but cannot indure to see it upon others truncher; How much hatred of Professors of holiness, and yet all professing they believe the absolute necessity of it. Yea *Thirdly*, the holiness we profess to be so necessarie, is a laborious painful work; in the Scripture it is called a striving a fighting a running, a working



a working; But the way thats generally taken about it, is, as if it were a going to a dancing or some pastime, thou that sayest that Holiness is so necessary, does thou so heartlessly follow it?

But let us come to a third, principle; all of us, acknowledge that without a reall change of our estate, our way and practice can never be acceptable to God, *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh*, all our service to God, while in the estate of nature, is but the service of an enemy, Rom. 7. 4. Ye are married to another that yemay bring fruit to God: if we be not married, we are like to a woman that bears children, and hath not a husband, they are all bastards. Now this is not minded in our way, if services be done, whether we be in a state of reconciliation or not, all is one. Hence all our services are never directed to a right end, they proceed not from a right principle; Bruits act not, say Philosophers, for an end, because they act not from a principle of reason; neither do Christians for the honour of God, because not from a principle of regeneration: Hence also our hatred of sin is so servil, we fear it as damning only, like some that will not touch a coal, because it is hot, for fear it burn them; but others will not touch it because it is black, lest it defile them. Yea, hence our services are fruitlesse; we pray and are not heard, they are the requests of one in a state of enmity. Now thou that sayest regeneration is necessary, that all thy worship may be accepted, whence is it, that it is so little minded? does not thy practice herein contradict thy principle?

Lastly

Lastly, that I may come to a close, it is one great principle of our religion, that our great work ought to be the exalting of Christ. This is it that we that are Ministers have especially in commission to preach, *He is an elect vessel, to lift up my name before the Gentils*, said the Lord to Ananias of Paul Acts 9. 15. this we are bound to by all the ties of duty and gratitude, this is the very scop of our religion, but how exceedingly is it contradicted? how little are we in conference of Christs excellency in our meetings together? Our discourses are like Pharaohs to Jacob, *how old art thou*, and *what is thy occupation*? who would have thought but something would have come from Pharaoh concerning the God of Abraham, who was famous amongst the Heathen, even at this time? yet nothing of this. If our discours of him be little, our meditation is lesse, our delight least of all; our hearts are little in Boyling, as the word in the first language, Psal. 45. 1. Imports, this good Master, though all his garments smell of Myrrhe, Aloes, and Casia, yet our distemper is such, as this smell relishes not.

All these and a great many more principles, we openly own, are as openly contradicted in our conversation; and how great matter of Humiliation there is in this, will appear in these things, 1. we not only not walk by principles we professe, but by principles we all disown; none will defend drunkenness, swearing, Sabbath-braking, or such like; all even the most prophane disown them: and yet, as if there were a law for them, so are they practised.

Now

Now how lamentable is this, that not only these things which God hath made principles to us are disowned, but these things that he hath forbidden are practised, as if they were principles? Secondly, if our principles were not sure, our contradiction to them were the lesse deplorable; But so sure principles, having all the wit of man can imagine, to confirm them. Many popish principles are pretended to be no higher then some Pop's decrees. But these named proceed from him who laid the foundations of the great earth, and streatched out the heavens as a curtain, who weighs the mountains in ballances, and holds the waters in the hollow, of his hand, and that they are proceeded from him we have all the security reason can require or imagine. Now that such principles should be contradicted, how lamentable is it. *Thirdly*, the principles as they are sure, so are they exceeding sweet; David had more joy in Gods testimonies then in al riches. All the contentment Ranters, have in their carnal pleasures are but as swine in a dunghill, their glasse goes soon out; an hours communion with God: though in a prison, yea the reproach of Christ, as counted by Moses, who was learned in all the wisdom of Ægypt, is greater riches then the treasures of Ægypt. And Paul, who was not a little learned in the Grecian wisdom, counted all these dung, for, the ὑπεροχὴ γνώσεως, the superlativenesse of the knowledge of Christ. *Thirdly*, It is yet the more lamentable, that there is a bundance of strength allowed to follow our principles, if it were depended upon,   
the

*the rock follows us, & the rock is Christ*; he is not only ready to do what we ask, but above all we can ask or think: he deals with us, as *Naaman* with *Gihazi*, when he run after him and prayed him to give him one talent, *I* pray thee (says *Naaman*) take two: It is indeed much to walk up to our Principles, but we baik beside Meal, we are able to do all things throw him that strengthens us; and yet to contradict our Principles, is sad!

Lastly, it makes it yet more lamentable, that there are such excellent encouragements, and so great a reward abiding the walking according to them; neither is it long to the time, when he that soweth in the spirit shall of the spirit reap immortality and life everlasting: we are not threshing in the waters, but sowing in a certain expectation of a harvest of glory, and yet to contradict our principles! All these laid together evidence how lamentable our contradicting our principles is. I shall only adde 3. helps for walking up to our principles, and to close. 1. Consider often that there are many things we do out of obedience to the Law of God, we abstain from murder, adultery, wait on ordinances, think it necessary to be somewhat more circumspect about the time of a Sacrament; how unreasonable is it then, to contradict the lawes of the same God, in other things, no lesse peremptorly commanded, under no lesse penalty? *God spake all these words, saying*, is the preface to all the commands of the law. if some of them had only proceeded from God, and others from Baal, or the God of Ammon, we might

might easily disput and dispense with our selves, but *God spake all these words.*

2. Keep up constant intercourse with Christ, as the fountain of sanctification; do not with him as some do with the old cloak, that they will take about them, when there is a shoure, and cast it of as soon as it becomes fair again: Some in sicknesse seek their pardon, as one would run into a ruinous house when there is rain, but would not dwell there. If we were dwelling in him and abiding in him, and walking in him, it would be lightsome to walk by our principles; the want of these influences, exceedingly occasions our contradiction to them.

3. Stand not upon reproaches that often lye in the way of following these principles; *These men are drunk with new wine*, said the multitude, of the Apostles, when the spirit descended on them, no, sayes Peter. Acts 2, 16. *This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel*, If thou can produce a line of the Bible thou walkest by the Kings Law, which ought to rule all the subjects; reproaches then are the fruits of their distemper.

---

## A SERMON,

On E P H. 5. 25.

*Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved his Church, and gave himself for it.*

**T**Here is nothing more suitable to a feast of love, then to treat of that love which gave a rise to the feast, this is to handle the Gospel of  
the

the day, often believers at such occasions, are so much in tossing their fears and doubts, that they forget obedience to that precept, *do this in remembrance of me.* My purpose therefore in this Sermon, is to glance a little from the words read, at the love of Christ manifested in the work of redemption; The Apostle from 22. vers. of this Chap. is leaving directions for the right ordering of relations among men, shewing to each one the duties of their relation: among the rest, these words contain a rule for husbands.

And in the rule we have a precept, and a patren; The precept, *Husbands love your wives*; the Patren, *as Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it.* The note of similitude, *As*, which does knit the precept and patren together, does not import any equality in *degree*, that ought to be betwixt the love of the husband to his wife and the love of Christ to the Church, but only some similitude in *kind*. For 1. This equality is simply impossible; not only for the nature of man corrupted, for so many things God hath commanded are impossible, so all gracious qualities are impossible; but it is impossible for the nature of man, even as it is created, and pure *Adam* could not perform obedience of infinite value and merit as Christ hath done, in loving his Church, and giving himself for it. Besides 2. God cannot in justice require of meer man, obedience proceeding from a personal union of the divine and human natures, such as Christs love manifested in giving himself for his Church was; hence divines prove well, that Christs obedience to  
the

the death, was properly meritorious, because it was *actio indebita*, for tho Christ man, be tied to obey, yet not to perform so noble obedience, in regard Christ, as God, can come under no law oblidging to obedience: So that neither could God, require such perfect love, nor was it possible even for Adam to perform; Therefore all imported in the note of similitude, is some kind of resemblance betwixt the Husbands love and Christ to his Church, as is evident from several other Scriptures where the same is used, *Gal. 4. 14. Ye received me as an Angel of the Lord; yea even as Christ*, this imports not an equality in degree, betwixt the receiving of Paul and Christ, but some similitude and resemblance. Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven, in that perfect patern of prayer, and many such we might instance in the Scriptures.

But since in this Sermon I purpose not a particular handling of the words, I shall not insist in a paticular explication of them, I shall only take one general observation from them, and insist upon it at this time.

**Observation** *That the love of Christ manifested in the work of redemption is matchless, and may fitly be made a patern and copie to the love required in the most intimat relations.*

In prosecuting this point which so Genuinly ariseth from this Scripture, there are two things I shall premise for opening of it. First. My purpose is not to speak of the love of Christ in the full latitude of it, as it comprehends the love of benevolence and beneficence



and is the root and fountain whence it flows all the acts of grace, terminat to believers, in time and eternity, but only of the love manifested in the work of redemption, this being proper to the Text, He loved his Church and gave himself for it. Neither *Secondly*, can we speak of this love according as the nature of it requires, since it is a mystery, into which even the Angels desire to pry, all that we can do, is, to do as the painter who being desired to draw the Sun, did take a black coal to draw it with, since he found it impossible for him to find any thing whereby to resemble it in the beauty and brightness thereof.

Only for opening the point a little, we shall insist on these two, we shall prove it and apply it. For the proof of it, that it is matchless, and may be a pattern for the love required in the most intimate relations, we shall demonstrate this from Scripture and reason: and first from Scripture, there be five or six things in Scripture, which all tend to prove it.

*First*, The Scripture calls it the love of God. 1 *Joh.* 3. 16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us. Every thing in God is matchless, even these attributes which are called communicable, there are but some shadows of resemblance of them in the creatures, but there is a special reason why we should look on his love as such, since it is not only termed the love of God, but God himself: *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, for God is love.* 1 *Joh.* 4. 8. God is love, not only loving but love it self.

*Secondly*



*Secondly*, The Scripture proclaims this love incomprehensible, *Eph. 3. 19.* There is *breadth* and *length* and *depth* and *hight*. *Philosophers* will not admit of four dimensions, but here the Apostle, who was abundantly learned, ascribes four to this, as to a thing passing all dimension. yea and immediatly on this subjoins an expression any would think on part of it inconsistent with another, *and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge*, to know it, and yet it passes knowledge, in the perfection of it, though a little of it may be known.

*Thirdly*, the Scripture assimilats it to the love wherewith the Father loves the Son: the love of a woman to her sucking child, or *Jonathan to David*, are unfit resemblances of this. There is no love to resemble it by, but one, *15. John 9. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.* How great the Fathers love is to the Son, is testified twice by an immediat voice from Heaven, *My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* The Prophet *Isaiah* calls him *the delight of his Fathers Soul, Isa. 42. 1.* And Christ himself *Prov. 8.* Testifies *that ere the foundations of the world were He was daily his delight;* And yet as the Father hath loved me, so I you.

*Fourthly*, It is frequently in Scripture made the pattern & copy of love to all the creatures. Not to multiply instances, ye find it twice so in this same Chapter *Vers. 2. Walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and gave himself for us.* And here again, in the *Vers.* read, *Love your wives, as Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it.* There are indeed some copies wherein a

scholer may out-reach his master, but here, as in the first *vers.* of the *Chap.* we must be followers of God as dear Children.

*Fifthly*, whensoever our love to him, yea even of his choise Apostles, are brought in competition with this love to us, it is so far undervalued that the name of love is denied to it like the staires that disappear as if they were no lights, when the Sun ariseth. *1 Joh. 4. 10. Herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us.* It is strange the Apostle gives our love the name of love through all the precepts of that Epistle, where love is commanded, But when it is set beside his becoming a propitiation for our sins, the name of love is denied to it, *not that we loved him.*

*Sixthly*, It is in the Scripture made the fountain and spring, out of which issues all his peoples love to him, as the Sun that is the fountain of all the light in the Moon or stars; our love, yea of all his elect in all ages, is but a ray, reflecting back again on the Sun whence it proceeded, *1 John 4. 19. We love him because he loved us first.*

All these in the Scripture laid together, prove it to be such as it is delineat in the point.

In the second place, to demonstrat yet further the truth of the point, we shal consider his love manifested in the work of redemption, in a fourfold reference. *I.* Consider it with a respect to the *person* loving. Secondly. with a respect to the persons *loved*, Thirdly. In the properties of it. Fourthly In the *effects* that it hath produced. And all the four will contribute to clear how matchless it is, and how fit to

be a patern to the love of the most intimat relations.

First, Consider it with respect to the person *loving*, it is the love of a person who is both *God and Man*, which adds a great deal of weight to it. 1. It is the love of a person who is God. Divins say, it renders the sacrifice of infinit value, that it was the blood of God. Practick divins say, that the sympathy Christ hath with believers, is of infinit excellency, because it is a Sympathy proceeding from a person that is God, for so he can be affected with the evils they feel, and the evils they feel not; and why not an infinit value in his love, because it is the love of God? We read in Histories of singular testimonies of love from Parents to their Children, Wives to their Husbands, and they reciprocally to them. But no man can put more liquor in a quart Bottel, but an quart, he were mad that should attempt to put the Ocean in a Cockel shell. Secondly, It was the love of a person who was Man, in his Humane Nature, beside all the infinite habits that were in him, beyond what were in *Adam*, He was anointed with the oyl of gladness above His fellows. Beside that, I say, he was content to learn by experience, how to be compassionate; He was tempted that He might be the more able to succour these that are tempted. He knowes the heart of a stranger as the Lord spake of *Israel*, *Exod. 16*. For he was once a stranger himself in the Land of Egypt. Now, love proceeding from a Person, In whom both these Natures are united, cannot but be match-

less, Remarkable is that word of *Bernard*, *Dilexit nos Christus dulciter, sapienter ac foeliciter; Dulciter quia carnem induit, sapienter, quia culpam cavet, fortius quia Deus erat*, It is sweet and strong, proceeding from one that is God and man.

Secondly, Consider with respect to these he loved, and this also will prove it matchless. Love usually is less singular, if there be any thing in the object attractive of it, as there is when we love him; but here nothing such, if we consider whom he loved, under a threefold notion. 1. As base and ignoble. 2. As loathsome, and filthy. *Thirdly*, as not only in a *State* of enmity but fraughted with *actual* enmity, against the person loving. First, as base and ignoble, we have indeed some instances, in history of love descending from noble to Ignoble; But to descend so low, as to love that that is farther below him, then the basest worm can be below us, there being an infinit disparity, which cannot be between meere creatures, what histories can paralel this? Beside baseness, there is filthiness, and loathsomeness, which being added to the former, makes it admirable *Ezek. 16.* when thou was lying in thy blood that became a time of love. We were as the word is, *Psal. 14.* altogether become filthy, there was none that did good, no not one, and yet to love us? But the *Third* added. that we were fraughted with enmity against him who loved us. Augustus Cesar, because he could not marry a mean woman who loved him, commanded yet a vast sum to be given her, to testify his respect to her love

love. But Rom. 5. *God commended his love to us that when we were yet enemies, Christ died for us.* Thirdly, take a view of the properties of this love, and it will appear more matchless: amongst many properties of it, I only mention at present these four.

*First*, it was altogether *free*, there was no necessity of nature, for he is admitted by a Covenant *Isa. 42.* yea we find him offering himself to the work of redemption, when mans case is seen to be desperat, *Psal. 40. Sacrifices and offerings thou didst not desire*, and what could man do for reconciliation beyond sacrifices and offerings? and when it is thus, *then said I, behold I come.*

*Secondly*, It was also *strong* and *vehement*, it was indeed a love many waters could not quench, God so loved the world, that he gave his Son; so loved, there is a great emphasis in that *so*; Amongst other things, it imports the transcendent fervency of that love manifested in the work of redemption.

*Thirdly*, It is a *discriminating* love, to *men*, and not to Angels. The Prophet Malachy commends the love of Jacob from this, that he hated Esau: though Esau was Jacobs brother, there was nothing in us, to cast the ballance, Angles were more excellent natures, it is true some in the schools say. 1. the sin of the devil was greater then mans, because their natures were more perfect, and they sinned without a tempter. Yet even this they cannot deny, but the price payed for lost man had been sufficient for their restauration, had it been intended for

them. Beside even those say, mans sins had several aggravations, theirs wanted, so that there was nothing antecedent in the objects, to excite this love to the one and not to the other, and O how great a difference makes it.

Lastly, it is an *everlasting* love, that his delight was with the sons of men Pro. 8. *before the mountains were brought forth*, so it is to everlasting. He cannot be budded to alter or change this love; Baalam attempted it with one and twenty sacrifices, to turn him from loving *Israel*, and to curse them, but it would not, Isa. 54. 7. *With an everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee. says the Lord thy Redeemer.*

*Fourthly*, If we consider this love in the fruits and effects of it, and we shall likewise here in find it matchless. The Apostle to the *Thessalonians* speaks of a *labour of love*, if ever there was love that might be called a labour of love, it is here. Amongst many things to manifest this, consider only to what a low he was brought in giving himself for his Church, which is the Testimony of His love the Apostle pitches on here, and there be only two things to pitch upon, to evidence this. 1. The *Names* that are given Him. 2. The sufferings that He did undergo, in testifying His love to His Church. 1. The *Names* that are given Him, He is called an Angel, which was far below Him; An Apostle which was yet lower; a Man, and the son of Man, a Babe, a Messenger, a Servant, a Shepherd, a Worm and not a man, a Curse, and if there can be any thing yet lower, *he became sin for us, that we might become the right*

*righteousness of God in Him*, what wonderful testimony of love is here? He that thought it no robbery, to be equal with God, and was His fellow, to become a *curse* and *sin* for us! the Apostle 1 Tim. 3. v. last, counts it a wonderful Mystery that he was at all manifested in the Flesh; but to be *so* manifested, how wonderful is it! But in the second place, if we should take a view of His sufferings that he did undergo in His Humane Nature in testifying this love, when he gave himself for his Church what reproach, what torment, what agony in His Spirit: it was strange to hear that come from Him, *my soul is heavy, and what shall I say*, He was *bruised* or as the words imports in the first Language. *Eaten*, for our infirmities. Neither can *Lellarmine*, nor any other Jesuit, prove that he merited any thing to himself by his suffering, but it was wholly intended for us. This testimony of his love is that which we are come together the day to commemorate, and which is represented in the breaking of the Bread and pouring out of the Wine.

Now let us lay all these together, & see if the point be not proven, that His love is matchless. and may be a copy for the most special and intimate love; required in the nearest relations.

#### *Application.*

There is only one use of exhortation, which I shall follow from this point thus opened, and we shall divide it in two branches 1. It serves to exhort to admire and praise His love. 2. To render love to Him for love.

1. First, It serves to exhort to admire and



praise His love. Let men dispute as they will whether Christ as Mediator be the Object of divine Worship, we may safely determine that His love manifested in the redemption of lost man, is a fit object of admiration and praise. Saul much admired it, and commended it in *David*, when he found him in the cave and did not kill him, will a man find His enemy, (said *Saul*) and will he not kill him? But how would *Saul* have spoken of this, for a man to find his enemy and willingly be killed for him May, we not at all sit down at this table, crying with *David* when he heard of the death of *Jonathan*, *O Jonathan, Jonathan, how wonderful was thy love to me! It was beyond the love of women*, and that we may make the better progress in this work of admiring and praising His love; I shall offer you some helps to it. There are some considerations, and some practises, whereby we may be furthered in it.

First, Consider, admiring and praising His love is the constant work of these who are in glory, *John* in his Revelation tells us, he often heard him crying, *worthy is the Lamb who was slain*, This is the song of *Moses* and the Lamb, that is sung here, and in conformity to this he breaks off the Revelation Rev. 1. vers. 5. with these words. *Now to him that loved us and washed us from our sins, in his own blood to him be glory and dominion for ever*. If we would have a communion day resembling Heaven, this must be our work also.

Secondly, Consider this is the proper work of the day; However Believers be taken up with tossing their doubts and fears, yet there



may be something of a temptation in this, to divert them from something more suitable to their present work, it is an unanswerable Argument some bring to prove that the primitive Church did not kneel in reception of the Sacrament, because they did not kneel for some Centuries on the Sabbath at all, looking upon it as a day of joy for Christs resurrection. It is true in this Sabbath we are met to commemorate a death, and that the death of the most loving Husband that ever had a being. Yet since it is the death of one who hath overcome Death, & who hath sent us word, *Rev. 1. 18. I am he that was dead, and am alive*; our work ought to be Praises and Admiration.

Thirdly, Consider there is nothing we can repay for all the love He hath manifested, yea there is nothing else he requires but Praises and Admiration. The deliverance from *Egypt* cost *Israel* many of their best and chiefest Cattel, there is nothing such here, *Offer to me the sacrifices of thanksgiving* is all that is demanded, and when will this Sacrifice be offered, if not upon such a day?

But this & many such considerations, though they may convince the mind that the thing is rationall, yet not sufficiently help to it, if these practices be not added.

First, Labour to get the heart in frame for praises and admiring this love; from what thou hast heard, thou mayst perceive thou hast an excellent Song, but if the Instrument be out of tune, it may be spilt, as many a good tale is in the telling, the 108 *Psalm* begins well, *My heart is fixed, Lord, I will sing*; get thy heart fix-

ed, that is possibly like *Israel* in *Eliaks* time, halting betwixt two, then praise.

Secondly, Repel the tentations that would put thee by from praising and admiring this love, say to them that which *Felix* said to *Paul*, *I will hear thee at a more convenient time*. Shall thou come to a Marriage feast, where thou art called to singing in thy mourning suit? Or is Christs love in giving Himself any thing the less worthy, that thy heart is ill?

But some will say this is easier said then done, they art not tentations but well grounded reasons, that keep me back from admiring and praising this love. Christian what are they? 1. Some say let them praise and admire who are interested in it, and advantaged by it, but thou art not such a one; But 1. Thou commend many things thou art not much advantaged by. The courage of *Alexander*, the policy of *Hanibal*, the wisdom of *Solon*, the bounty of *Vispasian*, are all much commended in Histories and yet the writers of these Histories not much profited by any of them: Christs love is admirable to Mankind, and praise worthy, be it terminate to thee or not: Beside, many praise, such as the glorified Angels, that are not interested in it, if thou shalt say He is to them a Mediator of Confirmation, many great Divines say so indeed, and others deny it, and as it is not easie to prove from Scripture, so not easie to answer the objections brought against it. However, He was not to them a Mediator of Redemption, and yet they admire and praise Him.

Truly, Thou mayst have interest in it; and

yet not discern it. Christ (say practical Divines) hath delivered Believers from all danger of vindictive wrath, but not from all the fear of it, till they come to glory: Thy fears then are no proof of thy danger, But if all these will not do, get interest yet in it; is the scop of the work of the day to make an offer of it. Embrace his offer, it is free, and so praise.

Others say, they cannot praise; though they will not deny their interest in it; yet they are under a present desertion, and so cannot praise nor admire. This objection Sion makes, *Isai. 49. ver. 14.* The Lord calls on heaven & earth to sing because of the Covenant of redemption: Sion sayes, sing who will I will sing none, Sion said *I am forsaken; my God hath cast me off.* It is true, it is with us as the Marygold that opens and shuts or closes as the Sun rise and goes down, yet be doing it as thou may; the Lord sometimes denyes assisting grace that his accepting grace may shine the brighter. If he gives the poor widow but two mits to cast into the treasury, it is one, if he Counts the two mits: The purest obedience, though, I confesse, not the most comfortable, is to do duties under a desertion, praise it then and admire it.

But I go to the second branch of the use. If his love be so matchless, render him love for love. It is reported of Holy *Bredford*, that sometimes the tears would be running down on his truncher when sitting at his meat, and when he was asked the reason of it, he said because he could not get fervent enough love to Christ, our obligation to Christ is such that the cold-

coldness of our love is wonderful; especially the exercise of love is suitable to this feast. *Zenophone* in his *Cyroped*, tells of one *Lygranes*, King of *Armenia*; who was taken with his Queen captive by *Cyrus* on a time, *Cyrus* asked him if he desired his liberty, and to have his Kingdom, and his wife restored to him; *Lygranes* answered him, For my liberty, and my Kingdom, I praise them not much, but if my heart-blood could redeem my Wife, I would cheerfully give it: afterward *Cyrus* having restored him all, and he was come home in his Kingdom, he asked his Queen what a one she thought *Cyrus* was; she replied, she knew not, my heart and my mind (said she) was so much taken up with the man who would have given his blood for my ransom, that I could think upon no other. If a Heathen could say so much of one who made but an offer of his blood for her ransome, O how much more we of Him, who hath gone far beyond offers. He hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. But since the exercise of love is so suitable a work to a feast of love, and one great part of our communion with him in the Sacrament, hereing, I shall only give these things to try the security of our love, and so close.

I. Thou must take up aright the nature of love; many think they love Him, because they do not hate him: *quid est amor*, said blessed *Augustine*, *nisi quædam vita duo aliqua copulans, vel copulare appetens quod scilicet amat, & quod a natur.* This indeed is an love which cannot be satisfied without enjoying of Christ; is thine

of

of this nature, or art thou content with Him.

*Thirdly*, Love to Him darkens and abates love of all other things in the soul. This Character usually practick Divines give of it, *Tanto quisque (said Bernard) à upe no amore disjungitur, quanto inferius delectatur*. It lets well in tryal on our love, to ask our hearts the question He Himself asked *Peter, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me more then these*.

*Lastly*, Love to Him is alwayes attended with love to his People and Interests, 1 Epistle Job. 2. The Aposttle is large in proving this, *If we love him that begets, we love also them that are begotten*. It is true, our love to them ought not to be so fervent as to him, but yet it still keeps a proportion to it, as the Sun in the Dy-al, though it move not so fast as in the Firmament, yet it keeps a proportion to it, it cannot be going forward in the Firmament, and backward or standing still in the Dy-al. Try by these your love, and finding it, ye may the more chearfully come to a Banquet of love.

---

## A SERMON

On JONAH. 1. 6.

*So the Ship-Master came to him, and said, what meanest thou O Sleeper?*

**T**HIS Prophet prophesied in the dayes of *Jeroboam* the second, we find him mentioned, 2 Kings 14. 25. Where he is called a Prophet and servant of the Lord, and though he prophesied of prosperity, yet with small success in  
fo

to corrupt a time. wherefore the Lord sends him to *Ninve* the Chief city of the *Assyrian* Empire which he is loath to undertake, partly from fear, and partly ( as some think ) loath to carry a Message from the *Jews* to the *Gentiles*: wherefore he resolves to flee by Sea to *Tarsish*. The Lord follows him with a storm; and when all in the Ship are at prayer to their Gods, he is asleep. For which, in the words read, he is reprehended by the Ship Master, *What meanest thou O sleeper?*

The words though they be the words of an Heathen, yet they contain a deserved reprehension of a Prophet of *Israel*; and in them are two things. 1. A description of the persons reprehending and reprehended, and both descried from their present work and condition, the one is the *Ship master*, and the other *a sleeper*. Secondly, The reprehension it self, *what meanest thou*, or, as the word in the first language, *what to thee?* A short pathetick speech, expressing anger in the reprehender, and unreasonableness in the reprehended. There is nothing difficult in the words, that we need to insit in explicating; *sleeping*, however it be taken figuratively in Scripture, sometimes denoting the carnall security of one in a naturall condition, as *Eph. 4. Awak thou that sleepest*; sometimes the quiet repose a believer hath in God, as *Psal. 3. 4. I will lay me down and sleep*, yet here it is taken properly yet so as it denotats also uncinuous security, when there was so great a storm; and all at prayer that were in the Ship with them.

There

There is one Observation I purpose to insist upon, but we shall speak a word of another, ere we come to it.

Observat. 1. *That security, when dangers are imminent, is unreasonable; even in the eye of*

*nature.*

For 1. Sudden and unexpected surprises add much to the weight of any danger; as in the dayes of *Noah*, Peter makes it a great aggravation of their stroke, that they were eating drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and the deluge came; a tryall hath no small advantage of us when it finds us a sleep. David could take Sauls spear from his head in the midst of his Army, when he assaults him asleep.

Nature teaches men to flee to some beeld when clouds gather that threaten rain; Its true, the Lord would not have His People anxiously vex themselves with thoughts of the cross before it come, sufficient for the day are the sorrows of it; If He bring thee to the Wilderness, he can also rain Manna; In it the promises of God are the promises of a Father, and such a Father as in the first Article of our Creed, we call a Father Almighty, and so let our sorrows, which are threatening us, let them be what they will, there is sufficient ground of a sweet and quiet repose in God; But this makes nothing against the truth of the point, we do not only counteract to the positive Laws of God, but to the very dictates and precepts of Nature, If tryals that are making so loud a noise, shall find us secure and asleep, as it is our great mercy to be so long warned before the stroke



stroke, the Ax (as it were) lying at the root of the Tree before it smite; so they rightly improve these warnings. that does as the Apostle *Heb. 11.* sayeth *Noah* did *By faith Noah being warned by God, and moved with fear, prepared an Ark to save himself and his Family.*

But I come to the observation I purpose to insist on.

*Observat. 2. That the worshippers of the true God are sometimes outstripped and may be justly reprobated, for their neglect of worship, by the worshippers of Idols.*

Thus is *Jonah* a Prophet of *Israel.* and a Servant of the Lord, here by a Heathen Mariner. The like we find, *Genes. 20. 6.* *Thus was she reprobated*; this word is very remarkable to our purpose, *Abimelech* said to *Sarah*, behold I have given thy Brother a thousand pieces of Silver, and then it is added, thus was she reprobated; *Abimelechs* upright and liberal dealing reproves *Sarahs* deceit: *Sarah* is not only outstripped, but even deservedly reprobated by *Abimelech* an Heathen.

My purpose is not in prosecuting this point, to compare together Idolaters in their moral indewments, or the performing of the duties of the second Table, with the worshippers of the true God, none that are acquaint with the Histories of their Lives or their Writings, but will easily discern, how far they have outstripped us; Here it is no disparagement to *Constantine* the Great, notwithstanding of all his Victories recorded by *Eusebius*, to say, that *Alexander* the Great outstripped him in *magnanimity* and  
forti-

*fortitude*; And if I should insist but upon three of them, who among the worshippers of the true God, can go beyond them, for excellent moral precepts? *Plato*, who for his precepts is called *diuinus*, and is thought by some to have conversed with *Jeremiah* in *Egypt*, which opinion *Augustine* at length confutes in his book of the City of the God, shewing that *Plato* lived an hundred years after *Jeremiah* his being in *Egypt*, and flourished threescore years before the *Septuagints* Translation; or if I should name *Seneca*, whose *Epistles* contain such excellent precepts for a Moral life, that some think he exchanged *Epistles* with *Paul* at *Rome*; Or *Cicero*, for whose salvation *Erasmus* does plead, as one who had improved nature to the utmost; I say, my purpose is not to compare the worshippers of the true God with them in these moral Qualifications, in which, at least some, have far, very far exceeded us.

My scop is only to compare with the worshippers of the true God in their worship; to this only my text leads. It is for neglect of this, that *Jonah* is reprehended and I shal labour to make it evident that, how false soever their worship was, yet they have far outstripped and may justly reprehend the worshippers of the true God in the exercise of it.

*First*, Though their Gods were no Gods, but Devils, falsehood and vanity, had eyes and saw not, ears and heard not, yet did they highly esteem them and reverence them *Micha. 454*.  
*Every nation walks in the name of their God*, amongst other things imported in walking in the  
the

the name of their Gods, this is one, they did boast and triumph in their Gods, so the *Ephesians*, *Acts 19*. All with one shout cryed *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*. Idolatrous *Micaah*, though he made his God himself, yet can say of it, *My God and what have I more?* And if I should tell what *Themoydydes* reports of the esteem the ancient *Grecians* had of their Gods; or *Livius* of the *Romans*, how highly they punished the least dishonour done to the Gods, I might take up a long time; now let us compare this with the worshippers of the true God, who triumphs in God or makes their boast of him? as *David* said his soul did; is he exalted as God? or confided in as God? or do we walk in the name of our God as every nation does?

Secondly, As they did highly esteem their Gods, so they were painful and frequent in the worshipping of them; even Idolatrous Israel when they are imitating them, *Jer. 8. 2*. See what an account *Jeremiah* gives of their diligence, *whom ye have loved, whom ye have served, whom ye have worshipped, and after whom ye have gone*. So many words to express their indefatigableness in their Idolatry. The Heathens having such a multitude of Gods, one almost for every thing, could not choose but be put to an great deal of pains in holding up their worship; Amongst *Lycurgus* lawes one asked him why he appointed so little for one sacrifice, to them he answered, because he had appointed men to be very frequent in sacrificing to them. Now compare this with the way of  
the

the worshippers of the true God : it is true our principles teach us a necessity of diligence in worship, the Kingdome we Aim at suffers violence: But who runs, strives, fights, labours, according to their principles? or of whose way can there be such account given, in reference to God? *whom ye have loved, whom ye have served, whom ye have worshipped and after whom ye have gone.* It is but some feckle's thing we do, and rarely we do that.

Thirdly, As they were painful in their worship to their Gods so they were very frequent and zealous and intent upon it. *Isai 57. vers. 5.* *Israel* is challenged there among other things, for *Inflaming themselves with Idols*: They were inflamed as a whore is with her lust; *Numa Pompilius* appointed some in the Roman processions to go crying, *hoc agite*; and *Pythagoras* forbade sacrifices to be offered when doing or thinking upon any other thing, compare this with the way of worship to the true God, though our rule oblige us to this, *be fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord*, yet how oft is our heart in his worship like *Israel* in *Elijahs* time, halting betwixt two? What wandring, what vanity of the thoughts, abounding, even when about his worship? Do we not ordinarily worship him, as one taking up a star through a prospect, who hath an shaking arme, sometimes he hath a glance of it, and presently loseth it again? Who prayes as if they were making intercession for their life? Or hears as the hungry man eats his meat? Or sings making a melody in their hearts to the Lord? Are we

Fourth-

not then outstriped in fervency ?

*Fourthly*, They preferred the worship of their Gods to their dearest and sweetest enjoyments, Jer. 35. 5. *They made their Children pass through the fire to Molech* : This was a dreadful thing : *Molech*, as some write of it, was a great image of brass, within which they did put their Children, and then set a fire round about the Image, & as the Children did heat and burn in it, the Mothers went about it dancing & singing that they might not hear the cry of their Children; And in the 106. *Psal*, the Lord taxes *Israel* that they did imbrew their hands in their Children guiltless blood, when they offered them to the Idols of *Canaan*. *Sozomen* tells us that at *Alexandria*, after *Constantin* did begin to reigne, it was incredible to see what bones of thousands of Children were to be found in some places of the City, who had been offered in sacrifice; And this same was, as *Acosta* the J. suit reports, frequent among the *Indians* in their worship; Certainly, these parents wanted not natural affection to their young ones, yet they postponed that to the worship of their Gods. Now compare this to the worshippers of the true God; what mole appears not an insuperable mountain in the way of his worship? Some will not come to the wedding because he hath a yoke of oxen to look after, some an wedding &c. Ah! what would we hazard for his honour or worship? Go we not near to the way of the *Gardarens*, who desired Christ to depart out of their coasts, because of their swine? in a word, who can lay upon

upon serious search of his way, that he prefers the honour of his God to his dearest enjoyments in the world?

*Fifthly*; They were much in dependance on their Gods in every thing they could be concerned in; If they were at sea, they had a God to look to and depend on for safety; of their cornes they had a God to depend on for fruitfulness; of their wins a God for that. The Romans went never out to any war but they multiplied sacrifices in their Capitol, if they had the victory, they eyed their Gods for it, as the Philistins who brought the Ark with songs to the Temple of Dagon, and set it up there as Dagon's captive; compare this with our way to the true God, do we acknowledge God in all our wayes, that he may bring it to passe? or do we in every thing make our requests known by prayer and supplication? what a sweet life might we lead, If every difficulty gave us an ear and to him with a petition, and every outgate with a song but our way is far from this; the Lord is sometimes put to complain of his people thus, *They say we are Lords, and we will come no more near thee.*

*Sixthly*; They, to testify their esteem of their Gods, did highly esteem of the sacredty of an oath. *Cicero* in his officials *de juramento*, it is wonderful to hear a Heathen speak so reverently of an oath, read by invoking the Name of the Gods: The story of *Regulus* returning to *Carthage*, because he had given his oath to return, is well known, though he knew he should be put to exquisite tortures, if he returned

ed, yet ere he falsified his oath made in the name of his Gods, he would return. But how little we esteem, either in making or keeping of them, our constant practice abundantly declare. All these six then laid together, which I have pitched upon amongst many I might have brought I hope sufficiently confirm the truth of the point.

*Application.*

There is only one use I shall prosecute a little from this point. It is so that idolaters & worshippers of false Gods, do often outstrip and may justly reprehend the worshippers of the true God? It serves for lamentation & humiliation; Tell it not in Gath & publish it not in the streets of Askelon, least the Daughters of the Philistins rejoyce: But to us what matter of lamentation is it? Especially if we consider these six things.

*First.* The excellency of our God beyond theirs; our God is the Lord who made Heaven and Earth; Our God is in Heaven, & doth whatsoever he will; who is like unto the Lord among all the Gods? Their Idols are Silver & Gold, the works of mens hands; they have ears & hear not, & eyes & see not: but how excellent is his name through all the earth? Now so excellent a God & yet worse served, how lamentable is it.

*Secondly,* Our principles & ground we walk by, & whereby we are bound to painful, zealous Worship to our God, are infallible sure; all that the wit of man could imagine to demonstrate the certainty of our principles and obligations



obligations to worship, we have it; the Son coming down from the Fathers bo om and revealing our duty to us, and a voice from Heaven witnessing to the truth of his being his beloved son, his being so ratified by so many properties, confirmed by so many miracles, so divine doctrine proceeding from him, as hath a clear stamp of a divine hand upon it. It is ridiculous to hear of the original of some of their Gods, to whom they offered sacrifices, often they were the work of their own hands, or some of the creatures which God had made their servitors; now how lamentable is it we should be outstripped in worship then, having so much reason to surpass.

*Thirdly*, If ye shall consider the sweetness of the duties, wherein we are called to perform worship to our God. An Idol signifies sorrow; what a grief do you think beloved it be to tender hearted mothers to imbrow their hands in the blood of their own guiltless Children? But the duties we are called to make a degree of Heaven on Earth; *In keeping of thy Commandments there is great reward*: Not only for keeping of them, but in keeping of them. What ease to a burdened mind is prayer, what joy in praises, what refreshing consolations from the meditation of God as reconciled through a Mediator, and so in all other parts of worship. *Irejoyced when they said unto me. let us go unto the House of the Lord*: now so sweet duties enjoyed us, and yet outstripped, how lamentable is it.

*Fourthly*, They never pretended to that obligation to worship their Gods, that we owe to

ours; though they thought they gave them corn and wine, and victory over their enemies, yet they never pretended that any of them died for them; to prevent their eternal ruine: But by this unspeakably great ty we stand bound to our woship; when our loss was desperat, he was broken for our iniquities, and in his stripes we are healed; and one of the ends he had in this was that we might be zealous worshippers of Him, *He gave himself* (Tit. 2.) *for us, that he might purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*: And we have his Apostles; whom he sent out in the world to gather a Church to him, pressing our duties on us, on this very foundation: *Ye are bought with a price, and are not your own, glorifie God in your bodies and souls*; Now after such an obligation, yet to be out striped, how lamentable is it?

*Fifthly*, We have encouragements in our worship from the expectation of a far more excellent reward, then ever they could dream of or hope for in their Elysian Fields, which *Seneca* comforted himself with, when at *Nero's* command he was cutting his veins, where he hoped to meet the soul of *Socrates*, were not only fancies, but suppose they had been real; how low a reward were they, being compared with that excellent, exceeding great, and eternal weight of Glory? Notwithstanding of all that is told us of our reward, that ear hath not heard nor eye hath not seen nor can it enter into the heart of man to consider what God hath prepared for them that love him, and that yet we should be out striped, how sad is it?

*Sixthly*

*Sixthly*, They never dreamed of assisting influences from their Gods to help them at their worship: all they did, they did in the strength of inherent vertue, natural, or acquired. *Socrates* could tell that his Philosophy made him patient and bear reproaches. And *Diogenes*, that his Philosophy made him contemptible, & delight in poverty. Ay but we have the influences of assisting grace secured to us by the word of him who cannot lie, to help us at our worship. If we know not how to pray, nor what to pray, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; there is a Spirit of Faith, & a spirit of love, and a spirit of a sound mind; Their waters came out of broken Cisterns, that could hold no waters; But the rock follows us, and the rock is Christ.

All these, laid together, evidence what matter of lamentation ariseth from this point. But that I may come to a close, by what means may we come to outstrip them in our worship to the true God? Since it is so far that we are outstripped, and so much to our reproach, that it should be so, it will be necessary to answer this.

And for answer to it, there were some things, helped them in their worship, which we are to imitate: And there are some things they neglected, of which we are to be careful. And by this we may come to outstrip them.

*First*, For the things they did, that we are to imitate, I shall name these three: 1. They were kept much in fear and awe of their Gods; in reference to the Heathen it will in some measure hold true, *primos in orbe fecit deos timor*: They were still afraid, if they

neglected their worship, their Gods would fall upon them and be avenged of it. it is true, it is too servil a principle of Gospel worship: Fear should not be the pace that should make our wheels go, it should be love; *If thou love me keep my commandments*: Yet where fear is wanting, usually worship is wanting also. *Eliphaz* in one of his discourses to *Job*, joyns these two together, though He misapply them to *Jobs* case, *Surely thou restrains prayer & castest off fear*. We have need to excite us to worship oftentimes, the Argument the Apostle uses in the end of the 12. of the *Hebr.* *Let us have grace*, sayeth He, *to serve Him with reverence, for our Gods are consuming fire.*

*Secondly*, They were much kepted to their worship by this, that they judged they had need of their Gods for every thing they enjoyed, of corn, or wine, or water, or success in war, or peace, or childbirth, or wisdom or what else, & therefore had a God for each of them: This impression would contribute much to help us in worship. He hath told us himself, *that without Him we can do nothing*, & also He hath told us, *that a man can receive nothing except it be given him from above*. If we seriously believed that both our doing & our receiving depended on him, our addresses to him could not but be more frequent and fervent.

*Thirdly*, They were much heartned in their worship by the responses they had from their Oracles; It is true, their responses were often dark and ambigous, so as whatever way the event fell out, the response could be made

to hint at it, as *Cælius* found by sad experience, yet Histories tell us that these responses cost them many dear and costly oblations. Certainly were we noticing the answers God gives to prayer, we should have more delight in it, & so, more frequency & fervency in it, we think our worship fruitless, & so loses heart of it; *Verily he is a God that heareth prayer*, but usually we wait not for our answer, nor stands not on our watch-towre to hear what he will say, but like unto a Post delivering a letter cares not what become of it, if once he get it delivered. Now if we could imitate them in these things that kepted them to their worship; we might readily come to outstrip them.

I shall only add two things they omitted, which being done, makes our worship, not only for the nature of it, but for the manner of it, far beyond these, which we are able to practise.

*First*, Though they were diligent & intent upon their worship, yet they never dreamed of any gracious qualification in the person that presented the worship; Nature's ladder was too low to scale the fort of a natural heart; But if thou can reach a change of thy estate, & to partake somewhat of the divine nature, & to be born of water & of the Spirit, it will give thy worship another luster; by faith *Abel* offered a more acceptable Sacrifice then *Cain*; *Cains* was the first fruits also as well as *Abels* was, but *Abels* had the ingredient of faith that *Cains* wanted, & so was more acceptable.

*Secondly*, Though their sacrifices were numerous and some of them costly and cruel, yet

they never dreamed of a High priest who stood with incense in his hand, which is the prayers of the Saints This is the great ground of a believers hope in Christ, that he sits a High priest not only to make intercession for the iniquity of his holiness, and to cover the imperfections of his worship, but to present it, and to second it before the Throne of God : He knowes that broken words and groans and such like sacrifices, performed with the incense of righteousness of such a Mediator, can have acceptation; therefore to outstrip them, put thy sacrifice ay in Christs hands, pray in his name, praise in his name, and do all through Him, and thus thy worship will be refined and prove eminent.

## A S E R M O N,

On JOHN, 3. 29.

*He that bath the Bride, is the Bridegroom.*

**I**N these words and the following, we have **Johns** last testimony concerning Christ, the occasion of which was this, some of **Johns** Disciples came to him & regret that Christ was brought so much in credit, and **John** and his baptism was like to be deserted, He, say they *to whom thou bearest testimony beyond Jordan, behold he baptizeth & all men follow him.* Where to **John** replies, to the end of the Chapter. **I.** What Christ did he did, it by a warrant from Heaven, *A man can receive nothing, except it, be given him from above v. 27.* Then Secondly, he shews some considerable differences betwixt Christ

Christ and himself, among which one in the words read, that Christ was the Bridegroom and Husband of the Church, for himself, his joy was fulfilled to be among the *Friends of the Bridegroom, who did stand by & hear his voice*. So that in the words there be these two parts.

*First*, One difference betwixt Christ and John, Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church, which John was not.

*Secondly*. An argument taken from a common known custom amongst men, proving this difference, *He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom*. The denomination of the *Bridegroom* being grounded in the *having of the Bride*, and the Church being only Christs, none else could be the *Bridegroom*, for none else had the Bride.

There be two things in the words necessarily to be cleared: 1. What is meant by the Bridegroom and Bride: and Secondly, why the relation is expressed in these terms, and not of Husband and Wife.

For the *First*, By *Bridegroom* is meant Christ, as they that run may read, for of Him the discourse runs all along, and by the *Bride*, the Church: He that will usurp the name of head of the Church, which even Gregory the Great called *scelestum illud vocabulum*, usurps Christs special prerogative. Though John, of all that was born amongst women, he was the greatest, yet thinks fit to disclaim it. But why is the relation betwixt Christ and his Church expressed in these terms.

1. Because that made best for Johns purpose, which was to prove that Christ ought to have



the preheminance above him in all things, since nature and reason teach men to give this to a Bridegroom, and not to his friends that stand by and are to attend him.

*Secondly*, The terms of *Bridegroom* and *Bride* suited well to express the nature of the relation betwixt Christ and the Church. For, 1. The Marriage is not yet fully compleated. At the great Day (*Revel. 4.*) the Bride shall be made ready, and she shall be brought into the Palace of the King. Beside, by this *John* shews, that Christ's love and affection to his Church is still tender and fresh as of persons in their marriage day.

But *Thirdly*, And especially, by this similitude is shewed the sweetness of the marriage-fellowship betwixt Christ and his Church, which though it endure to all eternity, is still as it were but beginning. How sweet soever the marriage-fellowship betwixt Husband and Wife be in the continuance of their marriage, yet there is not alwayes such feasting & mirth, as on the marriage day; but here the Husband is still in his marriage-robcs; and the Bride in hers, and the least and mirth of the wedding day still as they were but beginning, and they are both still as Bridegroom and Bride.

There be several pertinent observations to the present occasion, arising out of these words, but I shall only take one general, and follow it a little.

Obser. *That, there is a Marriage relation betwixt Christ and believers; He is the Bridegroom, and they are the Bride.*

This point, as it is clear here, so it is frequently

ly asserted in other Scriptures. *Psal. 45* all throughout, in a type of the Marriage betwixt *Solomon & Pharaohs Daughter*, the same marriage is expressed, there we have the Bridegroom in state, all his garments smelled of *mirhe & aloes, & cassia*, & the Bride in raiment of needle work, brought unto the King. *Isai. 54. 5.* The Lord comforts his afflicted People there, with the representation of this Marriage, *Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and no more remember the reproach of thy widowhood for thy maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name.* The same we have the Apostle asserting *Rom. 7. 4.* for ye are married unto another, that ye may bring forth fruit unto God.

In prosecuting this point we shall follow this method, 1. Inquire a little in this Allegory of a Marriage betwixt Christ & Believers. 2dly. Enquire how can there be such a Marriage, especially considering the odds betwixt the Parties; and 3dly, Shall apply it.

For the first of these, There is nothing more suitable for a Marriage-feast, then to be inquiring into the nature of the Marriage, neither do we stretch the Allegory beyond its scope, when we find these four betwixt Christ & Believers implied in this Marriage betwixt Christ and His Church. 1. A near & a firm union; which in Marriage hath not a parallel. 2. Intimate fellowship & communion which results likewise from Marriage. 3. The performing the several duties of their several stations in their married relation. Lastly, A reciprocal communicating of what belongs unto the one Party unto the

other. All these four are in a Marriage, & all, four concur in this Marriage betwixt Christ and His Church.

*First*, There is an union betwixt them, which though it be mystical, yet ceales not therefore to be real, it is frequently expressed in Scripture by similitudes taken from the union of the Head & Members, Root & Branches, Foundation & Building; but that which I am to evidence is, that it is the nature of a Marriage-union & there be two properties of it will evidence this. 1. In the Scripture we find the union of many relations joyned together to express this Union alone, take one place for all, *Mark 3. v. last. For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my Brother, my sister, & my mother.* How nearly are they united, that are stated in all these Relations, as Brother, Sister, & Mother? He that doth the will of God, is so to Christ. Beside secondly, The union betwixt Christ & His Church is not only nearer then that which is betwixt Him & standing Angels, he having united the Humane Nature to the Divine; But it is nearer then that which was between God & *Adam*. Divines say, that betwixt God & *Adam* there was *foedus amicitiae*, but not *foedus conjugale*, there was such an union while he stood, as is betwixt two who are intimately friends. But this is, *foedus conjugale*, where the union is so near that the Church is not only called the Bride of Christ, or the Body of Christ which is nearer, but sometimes gets the name of Christ Himself, *1 Cor, 12. 12. For as the body is one and hath many members,*  
and

*and all the members are one body, so also is Christ:* A strange name to be given to the Church, *so also is Christ*; but so near is the union, that the Church hath the very name of Christ given to it: Is not this then a Marriage-union? But if we shall in the second place add to this, the firmness of the union; neither adultery, nor death can dissolve it, which usually loose the Marriage-union. Not adultery, *Jer. 3. 1. Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers* & yet in *th. 14. Turn back sliding children for I am married unto you*: the Marriage not dissolved, no not for adultery. Yea death does not dissolve it; *The woman* (saith the Apostle *Rom. 7. 2.*) *is bound by the law to her husband, while the husband liveth, but if the husband be dead, she is loosed*; but here death looseth not the law of the Marriage, *Rev. 14. Blessed are they that die in the Lord*, as they trusted in the Lord & walked in Him, & delighted in Him, *so they die in Him*, yea, whether they live or die, still they are the Lords; so that the union is a Marriage-union.

We come secondly to shew the intimate fellowship & communion, which concurs to make up this Marriage, & which is the second thing we proposed from the allegory. It is true, though the Marriage-union be even in this life as firm & sure as ever it will or can be, yet the Marriage-communion is far from the perfection it shall have; there is notwithstanding real communion betwixt them, *Truely our fellowship is with the Father & his Son Jesus Christ 1. Joh. 1. 3.* *Truely*, it is not then a fancy, & that *truely* there is such a Marriage-fellowship betwixt

betwixt them, is evident, among many things, from these two. 1. Their near conversing together. 2. Familiar communication of secrets one to another.

1. Their familiar conversing together, which in the Scripture is holden out, in these & such like expressions, of *walking with them*, of *dwelling in them*, in *coming to them*, & *supping with them and they with him*, of *rejoycing over them to do them good*, as the *Bridegroom rejoyceth over the Bride*; & if all these be too little to express it, He puts them in his *bosom*, *Isaiah 40. 11.* the Lambs that are not able to walk, *He puts them in his bosom*. Doth not all these, laid together, evince a free & a familiar conversing together.

But if we shall add to this, the second, the free & familiar commutation of secrets, *the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, & the Spirit of the Lord. Christ can tell his Disciples, *John 15. I call you not servants but friends*, because he had put them so far on His secrets which usually is not done to meer Servants. *I have told you all*, says he, *I have heard of my Father*. Is there not here a commutation of secrets, upon Christs part? The like is also upon the Churches, *David* puts it in one of his Psalms, *All my complaint is before thee, & my groaning is not hid from thee*. My groanning, there are many things we groan for, that we would tell none one earth; but my groanning is not hid from thee, Is there not then here a mutual commutation of secrets? There be many other things wherein communion betwixt Christ & His Church consists, but these two tend most

to prove a Marriage communion, their familiar converse together, & their spiritual commutation of secrets. I go to the third.

In the *third* place, i we shall consider, for constituting this Marriage, their mutual performing the duties of this Relation; we find them in Scripture Proposed as Paterns to all that are in Marriage-relations: *Husbands love your wives, as Christ hath loved his Church, & wives be subject to your Husbands, as the Church is subject unto Christ.* The love, which is the summe of the Husbands duty, upon his part *Eph. 3. Passeth knowledge*, there can no love be found to resemble it, but one, *John 15. as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you*; how lovingly speaks He to the Church throughout the Song, usually in such terms as these, *My love, my dove. my fair one.* & on the other part, the Church is subject unto him, she obeys Him even as *Sarah* obeyed *Abraham*, & called him Lord: That is true, the obedience is imperfect, & hath many cracks into it, yet she esteems all his commandments concerning every thing to be right, & He graciously accepts of the Will in stead of the deed.

*Lastly*, There is in this Marriage a reciprocal commutation of what belongs to the one party unto the other. 1. Upon Christs part, it is impossible to enumerate all the particular Jewels, far lets the high inheritance, that is given the Church by Him; we must rest upon that the Apostle hath, *1 Cor. 3. towards the end, all things are yours, & ye are Christs*, all things present, & things to come, amongst the rest,  
death

*death* is yours, it is no longer your enemy, but your servant, for ye are Christs. Now whatsoever may be comprehended under all *things*, He communicates to His Church. It is true the Church hath nothing to give Him. Let *Pelagians* talk of their preventing God, and *Papists* of their merit, and of their superogating, what they will, Believers know their goodness extends not unto him, only she gives her *self*, and she gives her *debt*. 1. She gives her self, the Apostle commends this in the *Macedonians*, that *they gave themselves unto the Lord*. And 2. Their debt, because His He payes it, and discharges their debt, *the hand-writing of ordinances which was against them*, and contrary to them, *by nailing it unto the Cross*. Thus we have briefly shewed wherein this Marriage consists.

The second thing we proposed is, How can such a Marriage be possible especially considering the vast odds betwixt the Parties. For clearing this, I shall briefly say only these things.

*First*, Believers in their eternal election are given to Christ by His Father, it is true we know but little of the manner and way of the eternal Transactions betwixt the Father and Son; and some are too bold with Gods secrets in determining herein: that is sufficient to our purpose, to know that the Father hath from all Eternity made a gift of His Elect unto Christ and in this is laid the first foundation of their Marriage union and communion, *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me*, and again of *all that the Father hath given me, I have lost none*:



so that what ever they be in themselves; yet since they are the Fathers gift, in their election, there is in this a foundation laid for a Marriage.

*Secondly*, The love of Christ, however it be high in regard of the person loving, yet with all it is very condescending in reference to the thing loved, yea the more condescending it be and the less attracted by any excellency in the object, the more of the nature of pure love there is into it, *amor purus*, said Bernard, *nō est mercenarius*. His love then being altogether free, (hence it is stouping) can, and does very well condescend to bestow this highest love-relation upon basest Worms: even so great a God to love with such a great love such as we. Now from the love which is pure love proceeds this Marriage, and who can hinder his love?

*Thirdly*, How low soever our natures be in regard of Creation, being made a little lower then the Angels yet not a little advanced above the Angelical nature, by reason of the personal union of the Humane nature, with the Divine in the Person of the Mediator, God man having sit down at the right hand of the Father, to which of the Angels said He at any time; *sit thou down at my right hand*. Ahasuerus in his marriage with Esther did make her no more Noble in blood then she was before; But in this Bridegroom, this is singular, that he has lifted up the nature of His Bride in the union of the same nature with the Divine; it is nothing so strange then there be a Marriage.

*Lastly*, As for the Moral distance betwixt Christ and His Bride, this is also removed by washing

washing her in His own blood. It is needless to debate whether our union with Christ, or our justification preceed in order of nature, since in order of time the odds cannot be great. But we are all washen before our Marriage-communion with Christ, and as *Esther*, perfumed with the incense of the righteousness of Jesus the Bridegroom: Now lay these four together, and the Marriage, notwithstanding the vast odds betwixt the Parties, will not appear so strange. But I go to the Application.

*Application.*

There is a threefold use we shall follow from this point. Is there such a marriage betwixt Christ and Believers? Then let all admire and praise the Bridegroom for this admirable condescendency; *thy Maker is thy Husband*, are words of wonder; there be these things that make the Marriage truly admirable.

*First*, The majesty and greatness of the Bridegroom. The Apostle forbids us to be unequally yoked, but how unequally is He yoked, the brightness of the Fathers glory, the express image of His Person, He that thinks it no robbery to be equal with God, the man that is his fellow, whom all the Angels adore, thus to condescend how admirable is it?

Especially if in the *Second* place we consider the baseness of the Bride: Might not the Church say as *Abigail* said to *David*, when he sent to take her in marriage; *1 Sam. 25.4.* Behold let *mine Handmaid* be a servant to wash the feet of the Servants of my Lord: How base and polluted are we, and yet admitted to such a Marriage.

Marriage, and taken into His bosom!

If *thirdly*, We consider how earnestly He sued us, and how many repulses he endured, before he could gain our consent! How oft he did stand at the door and knock till his locks were wet with the dew of the night! How oft did he put in His hand at the hole of the door, and his fingers dropped myrthe! How oft did He intreat, beseech, allure with promises, and yet we grieved His Spirit, despised it, quenched it! How oft was he made to sit down and weep over us, as He did over *Jerusalem*, and say, *Oh! if that thou in this day had known the things that belong to thy peace!* How oft has He piped unto us, and we have not danced, and mourned unto us, and we not lamented!

*Fourthly*, Consider the admirable priviledges we are advanced to, by this Marriage; the Church in the second of *Hosea*, after she has tryed all other lovers, *vers. 7. I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me then it is now.* How noble a Husband, and how sure an inheritance! What sweetness of content in fellowship with Him! *I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste;* says the Spoule, in the Song; the half of the truth cannot be told of the greatness of this Priviledge, and how much, especially at the Marriage feast, ought we to be admiring it.

The *second* use, If there be such a Marriage, labour Christian to attain it, this is that we have in commission to offer to thee; Ministers are sent out, as *Eleazar Abraham's* servant, to seek a wife to their Masters son; do not despise thy

own mercy. If thou ask what shall thou do in order to thy closing with it; I shall offer thee these helps briefly.

I. Thou must renounce all treating with thy other lovers, with whom either thou hast contracted, or art about contract a Marriage, thou cannot be married to both; *If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, and old things are past away.* Thy drunkenness, swearing, sabbath breaking, careless walking, hypocrisie, or what else, it is but adultery thou committest with them. The man whom now thou has is not thy husband, said Christ to the woman at the well. Stand not at it, to give up with these, the Bargain we drive the day, is like to a Mother who offers her Child an Apple to quite the knife, he hath in his hand. that would cut his Fingers. What ever promises these lovers make, thou will come in the end to say of them as Poets fable, *Ariadne* said of her husband *Theseus* when he left her deolate & lone in an Island of the Sea, *Mitius inveni quam te genus omne ferarum.*

But secondly, If thou wilt attain this Marriage, hearken to His wooing motions, I shall in this, name but two or three steps of His procedure in his suit of Marriage, and see how thou carriest to him in them.

*First*, Possibly the Lord by His Ordinances, darts in some beams of Light into thy Understanding; so that thou who was formerly an ignorant, comes by it to see the evil of some sins thou hath delighted in, or canst discourse rationally of some truths of the Gospel thou wast ignorant of, take heed how thou has this  
Candle

Candle of the Lord lighted in thy bosom; If thou continue in that sin after it, or only pride thy self in thy knowledge, thou has resisted of His wooing-motions. He hath been standing at the door knocking, and thy answer has been I have put off my coat how shall I put it on? And, that thou was resolved to continue a bed.

*Secondly* Readily Christ proceeds farther in his suit, by his Spirit fortifying the light in the understanding, & making it set the conscience in fire with the sense of sin. and the apprehension of wrath; this is one of his wayes of wooing, how unsuitable soever it appear at first to marriage-love. Now see how thou carries to this, take heed where thou brings water to quench this fire, if thou divert it, or like Saul take an Instrument of musick to cure it, and dar not entertain it till thou get water drawn out of the wells of salvation thou extinguishes one of his wooing-motions.

Or *Thirdly*, If he go farther yet in his suit, and stir in thy affections some desire after Christ, thou sayest from the commendations thou hearest of him, O if he were mine! But readily to morrow when the Sacrament is by, thou lookest on it as a man will do on a bargain he made in his drunkenness, row it, and do what he can, to cast it again; this is to despise the marriage. In a word learn carefully to entertain his suit, Many, especially at Sacraments, are like some leasee servants on whom in the morning their Master calls, and they answer *coming*, and falls asleep again, and if he call again the second time the same answer, but falls asleep

asleep again; this in his wooing in his entertain-  
ment, He sayes in his ordinances *arise my love ,  
my dove, my fair one , & come away*, for this is  
not thy rest: We answer at the ordinances  
while the cry lasts, *coming*, and then falls a  
sleep again; this is to despise the marriage.

These three helps I have given you to at-  
tain to this marriage; do not stand disputing  
thy unworthiness or thy unsuitableness to this  
marriage, at least cast not at it because thou art  
not his match: *Abigail* judged her self bad  
enough to wash the feet of the Servants of  
*David*, yet she rises and goes with the servants  
of *David* to take him to her Husband. *What  
if God willing to shew mercy on the vessels of  
mercy*, sayes the Apostle, *who art thou O man  
that repliest to God*. If he offer thee a marriage  
and his offer is sincere, it becomes not thee to  
charge him with imprudency, call thy self as  
unworthy as thou wilt, yet with *Abigail* up & go  
with the messengers, & accept of the marriage

*Third Use*, Is it so that there is a marriage  
betwixt Christ and his Church, then in the  
third place, let such as have attained this high  
priviledge learn to improve it, especially in  
these following particulars.

*First*, Thou may come with confidence and  
cheerfulness to his table in this ordinance of the  
Sacrament: the Master of this Feast is thy  
espoused Husband, as he that hath the apple  
tree hath a compleat right to all the fruit that  
growes upon it; this is one part of the marriage  
communion, which results from the marriage-  
union, He sayes to thee, take eat, this is my  
body which is broken for you. *second-*

**Secondly**, By vertue of this marriage thou hast an excellent answer to all intyseing tentations. thou can tell the tempter in his suit, thou art already married, and what hath he to do to entise anothers Wife. *Abasuerus* could not indure to see *Haman* falling on the Bed of Queen *Esther*: What will he force the Queen before mine eyes, said he. Thy husband is a jealous God, tell this to the tempter.

**Thirdly**, Thy being cloathed with this Husband affoords the an easie way how to manage any thing above thy strength; put it over upon him, thou art to do as *Manoahs* Wife did when the Angel came to her and told her of the birth of *Sampson*, Stay, sayes she, *till I call my Husband*.

but some say, there is no question of encouragements a new resulting from this marriage: But I doubt if indeed I be married unto him; take then some marks to try it by.

**First**, If thy marriage love be only reserved for oim; A woman may love her children, friends, and with some kind of love, her possessions, but her marriage love ought only to be reserved for her Husband, *Psal. 73. vers. 25. There is none on earth that I desire beside thee* the benefil of th love is for him, and other things loved with a reference to him.

**Secondly**, How does thou take with his absence? is it thy affliction or not, *Matth. 9. Can the children of the marriage chamber mourn so long as the Bridegroom is with them. but the day shall come, he shall be taken from them, then they shall fast*; does thy joy ebb and flow with his



his presence, and absence? this is a good symptom he is thine.

*Thirdly*, Try it by thy subjection to his laws. The woman is bound by the law of the Husband, so long as the Husband liveth, *Rom. 7. 2.* By his being a Husband he ceases not therefore to be a Lord, *Psal. 45. For He is thy Lord and worship thou him*: The more love, the more obedience: *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*; Its not some flash of a desire after him at such a time as this, will prove a marriage, but where there is a constant tract of obedience to him as a Lord, there is a sweet proof of his being thy Husband. *Amen.*

## A S E R M O N

On ISAIAH 45. 24.

*Surely shall one say in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.*

**I**N the entry of this Chapter, we have the Lord comforting *Israel*, who were hopeless that ever they should return out of *Babylon*, by naming *Cyrus* an hundred years before his birth, whose *right hand he would uphold*, & that they might the better believe, that notwithstanding all the power of the *Babylonians*, *Cyrus* should deliver, the Lord tells them, he had done greater things then that came to, *He formed the light*, vers. 7. and vers. 18. *He formed the earth and established it*; this encouragement continues from the beginning of the Chapter to the 22. v. from thence to the end of the Chapter, we have a pro-

a prophecy of the calling in of the Gentils, *Look unto me all ye ends of the earth and be saved*; and in the words read we have the happy condition of the believing Gentils when they shall be called in; they shall find *in the Lord righteousness and strength*, and in this they shall triumph and glory.

This being the scope of the words. In them these three particulars are considerable. 1. A compend of the privileges of the believing Gentils, *righteousness and strength*. 2. The fountain of the privileges, *In the Lord*. 3. The triumph the Gentils shall make because of their privilege, *Surely shall one say*.

Two things in them are necessary to be cleared. 1. What is meant by *righteousness & strength*. Secondly, what is implied in these words, *Shall one say*. For the 1. Some refer the two only to times of trial, making them to relate to captivity in *Babylon*, and the meaning to be, in the Lord I shall find righteousness, supporting strength, and faithful dealing, under the captivity. But with *Calvin*, we take the words as the privilege of the Gentils, who should come to Christ, and so (as *Calvin* observes) comprehend the two main points of our salvation, strength in Christ, & righteousness, for covering our defects, in Christ. For the *other*, what is implied in *shall one say*: It imports a triumph, and glorying in these privileges, as usually the like expression imports in this prophecy, *In that day shall ye say*, 12. *Ch.* So that the whole meaning of the words comes to this, that when the Gentils should look to Christ, they should triumph

triumph in their condition, because of the righteousness & strength they should find in him. There be several observations we might take notice of from the words, but I shall only pitch upon one, and prosecute it in this Sermon.

*Observat. That the strength whereby believers Act in duties; and the righteousness whereby the imperfections of their duties is covered, are both to be found in Christ.*

This point is clear from the words, the believing Gentils, who look to him & are saved, triumph in this, that they find *righteousness and strength in him*, in prosecuting of it we shall take the doctrine in two parts. 1. I shall shew that our strength for duties, is in Christ: & 2dly, That the righteousness that covers the defects of our duties, is also to be found in him.

For the 1. That the strength whereby we perform duties, is in Christ: we shall 1. prove it from Scripture. 2dly, Give some grounds of it. 3dly, Apply it, For the proof of it from Scripture, there be these things in the Scripture, that tend to confirm it.

*First*, The Scripture every where declares man utterly impotent for performing the meanest duery without God. If he be called to will, it is *God that must work it in him*; If to do, it must proceed from the same God, Philip, 1. 13. If to pray, *the Spirit must help our infirmities* Rom. 8. If to hear, *He must awaken our Ear*, Isai. 50. Yea whatever we do, there is nothing of it we are able to do of our selves, no not of our selves to think so much as that that is good.

2dly, What duties we are commanded to  
doe,

doe, we are expressely commanded to do them in the strength of Christ. If to resist tentations, we are to be *strong in the Lord and the power of his might*, Eph. 6. 11. If to walk according to the rules of the Gospel, *we are to walk in him*, Coloss. 2. 12. If to hope, he most *strengthen the heart*, Psal. 27. Last. If to carry a right under deserions, we must *trust in the name of the Lord*, Psal. 41. 6. and Last, If fruitful in any duty; *we must abide in him as the branch in the root*, John. 15. 4.

Thirdly, It is evident also from the names that Christ hath given unto him in the Scripture; as, Our *life*, Col. 3. 4. Our *light*, Psal. 27. 1. Our *hope*, Coloss. 1. 27. Our *root*, John 15. 4. Our *consolation*, Luk. 2. 19. Our *wisdom*, our *sanctification*, all which prove the truth of the point.

Fourthly, In the Scripture the Saints have ascribed the praise of whatsoever they have, either of active or passive obedience to him. If they suffer patiently, *I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me*, Phil. 4. v. 13. If they act in their duty, *Not I, but the grace of God in me*, sayes Paul. Yea if they preterve, *thy right hand upholdeth me*, Psal. 63. 8. Yea the praise of their life to him, *I live, not I, but Christ that lives in me*, Gal, 2. 20. All these laid together prove abundantly from Scripture, that our strength for duties is in Christ.

As for the grounds of it, why the Lord hath put our strength in the hand of Christ, and not in our own, I shall name but these four.

First, By his our strength under the Covenant of grace is surer laid up, then it was under the

D

Covenant

Covenant of works : once our strength for works was in our own hands, *Adam* though the perfectest meer man that ever was, both for moral and gracious induements, yet how soon did he make ship-wrak of it ! Yea the patrons of univerſal grace, who aſſert that God hath given ſufficient grace to men for attaining ſalvation, can neither ſay that it would be effectual for ſalvation, or that it is not often loſt, without the influences of aſſiſting grace: but by this way of making Chriſt the fountain of ſtrength, our ſtrength is put into the hand of one who can not change, who is one and the ſame yeſterday, and the day, and for ever.

*Secondly*, Chriſt his becoming our ſtrength for duties, ſuits well to the great deſign of the Goſpel, which is the advancing of his own glory : For 1. This tends to keep up his peoples dependence upon him ; This makes a thick court of ſuppliants, which is much for the honour of a Prince. If we had a ſtock of grace in our hand, we would readily ſay, as *Iſrael* did, *We are Lords and will come no more near thee.* He that hath riches enough of his own, deſpiſeth begging; and he that hath health enough, ſeeks not after a phiſician. It is true there is inherent grace given, in effectual calling, to believers: But it is as an ſpark of fire in greenwood, which, if it be not continually blown upon, it would die out ; whether *Adam* needed the influences of aſſiſting grace, notwithstanding of all his inherent grace, is to me beyond controverſie : Neither did it derogate from the perfection of his eſtate. But that we conſtantly need

need it, and ought to be still dependent for it, who will deny? Secondly, as this dependence is honourable for God, so by putting our strength for duties in Christs hand, his people has still fresh and new matter of praises: Every new enlargement of heart for any performance affords the subject of a new song, and thus He is still glorified by them.

*Thirdly*, Our strength being in the hand of Christ, tends not only to advance the honour of Christ, but our obedience in the great duties of the Gospel. There are two great duties, which are eminently advanced by putting our strength in Christs hand, *Faith* and *self denial*.

**I.** This way makes a great deal of work for faith especially as we live by faith a life of sanctification, every branch of holyness calls for an new act of faith; not only is faith to be acted in order to the acceptance of our duty, but for strength to perform; and this eminently promotes self denial, when there is most enlargement of heart in duties, we must remember it is derived from another; there is a remarkable word. *D u. 8. He fed them in the wilderness with Manna, which thy Faith is knew not, that he might humble them.* How could this humble them? Was it not Angels food? But it was food He behoved to give them daily, and this tended to humble them. How excellent soever the influences of grace from Christ be, yet since there is fresh need of them daily, this tends to humble thee.

*Fourthly*, This putting our strength in Christs hand makes Christs yoke both easier & sweeter

to his people, then if their strength were in their own hand. 1. It makes it easier, *If a Father shall undertake to pay his sons expence at every taverne he comes to, its more easie nor if he had given him money in his purse to pay for himself.* We have no more to do now, but ask & it will be given us & knock & it shall be opened unto us. Israel had more ease in getting their food in the wilderness, nor they had when they tilled & sowed for it in their own possessions; they had here no more to do, but gather what was rained down to them. It makes his yoke also sweeter, then if our strength were in our hand. *My beloved put in his hand at the hole of the door, & his finger dropped myrrhe*, that which drops from his fingers, it hath to his spouse the relish of mirrhe; that he as our nurse must put our meat in our mouth, & that we are to be strong in the grace that is in Jesus Christ, is the sweetest ingredient in our performances.

It were very pertinent with the point to enter here with *Pelagians*, who of old did talk so much of mans being able by the power of natural qualifications to prevent God, & merit the first graces from God, by a merit of congruity: against whom, *Augustin* among the Fathers, & profound *Erastwardin* in his Book, *De causa Dei*, have written at great length; the Patrons of universal grace, *Papists*, *Arminians*, who also are at best *Semipelagians*, in opposing the truth, extolling man to the dishonour of Christ: but how pertinent soever this were to the point, the unsuitableness of it to the present occasion



occasion shall make me wave it, & come to the practick application of the point.

*Application.*

*use 1.* Is it so that our strength for duties is put in the hand of Christ; in the first place, take heed of making the wrong use of it as if no attempt were to be made at duties, but when we had actual influences of strength from Christ; how frequent is this? Especially at Sacraments; How can I sail without wind? Or can such a lame one as I walk, if I be not born? To obviate this I shall offer these considerations.

*First,* Our *obligation* to duties remains, though Christ should withdraw strengthening influences of grace; our impotency is much acquired, & God loseth not his right to require obedience, though we have lost our strength to perform it, a creditor hath sufficient right in law to crave his debt, though the debtor hath debauched away all his estate, & thereby becomes incapacitated to pay him.

*Secondly,* we may do much as to the *substance* of duties even under a desertion, though the actual influences of grace be simply necessary for the gracious qualifications of them; there is yet more in our power, yea even suppose in an unregenerate estate, far more when only under a desertion & wanting assisting grace, then we do; yea usually assisting grace is given when we are active in exerting & stirring up inherent grace Psal. 27. v. last. *wait on the Lord and be of good courage and He shall strengthen thy heart.*

*Thirdly,* The Lord often denies assisting grace, that his accepting grace may shine the brighter;

as he gave the poor woman but two mits, yet he commended the two mits, she did cast into the treasury; usually our praises are loudest, when we find him accepting the duties that are mixed with manifest imperfections, *Psal. 116.* David sayes. *The Lord heard him when he cryed & graciously inclined his eare when the cords of death took hold on him.* & with all when he considers the faintness & defects of his cry, that it was then when he was in haste saying, all men are lyars, that such a cry should be heard, see how he is enlarged in praises, *I will call on the Lord while I live,* I love him what shall I render to him, thy servant Lord! thy servant! If he give thee only to groan, what if he commend that groan, & look on it as the groan of a dear Child, as he did on Ephraims bemoaning himself *Jer. 31. 18.*

*Fourthly,* Christ sometimes gives strength for duties & it is not discerned, *Hosea 12 vers. 3. & 4* Jacob by *his strength he prevailed with God and had power over the Angel:* the Angel wrestled all night with Jacob, & yet gave Jacob even when he was wrestling with him, the strength of a Prince, as a Prince he prevailed with God. Often we complain of the want of what we are enjoying, *Solomons Song Ch. 4. v. last.* the Church prayes, *Let my beloved come to his garden my sister my spouse;* he speaks of him as absent, but He tells her he is present, some men will seek their hatt when it is upon their head, & you may have strength and not discern it.

*Lastly,* Suppose he should deny thee strength to act in thy duty: not only art thou a debtor to

to him for obedience, & he is none to thee for assisting grace: But also thou ought carefully to search, what it may be that impedes his strengthening influences. We are often like orphaned children, that when the fathers frown on them, fret at their condition, but consider not their fault; possibly thou has abused assistance formerly given, quenched & grieved his Spirit.

But I come to the two *uses* of the point, having guarded against the abuse of it.

*First use*, is our strength in Christ. It reproves these who set about duties in their own strength. It is an excellent resolution of *David*, *Psalm 71. 16* *I will go in the strength of the Lord and make mention of his righteousness, even of his only.* there be these inconveniences which arise from our performing duties in our own strength.

1. This makes many empty resolution: When we hear of duties in preaching of the Gospel, presently, at such occasions especially we resolve to believe, to consent, to walk more watchfully, & doth not eye Christ for strength: This is to bring but the thing that is not there. Can any gather grapes off thornes, or figgs off thistles, or can that which is, pure proceed from that which is impure? This proves nothing, but clouds without rain.

Secondly, The forgetting this makes the work of God a burden to us, we strive to wring our performances out of our own hearts; which are as dry hearbs, that have not the juice in them. We seek; & thus we toyle & wrestle like one lifting a burden above his strength, where-

as if Christ were eyed for strength, his yoke would be easie, and his Commandements not grievous. They that wait thus on the Lord shall mount up as the eagle, they shall run and not be weary, and walk and not be faint,

Thirdly, The neglecting of this produces a yeelding to every light *temptation*; we foolishly encounter it in our own strength, who art thou said *Saul* to *David* a stripling, and he a man of war from his youth, *Be strong in the Lord* and in the power of his might, is the first part of the rule Paul gives for resisting of temptations.

Fourthly, The forgetting of this makes our services unacceptable to God, and fruitles to our selves, as God relishes no service, but what proceeds from his own spirit; so it is best, and here, in his own strength shall no man prevail. Amongst other things imported in that whatsoever ye ask in my name, this is one, in my strength, it is a sad challenge Christ hath against even his own Disciples, hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name.

Lastly, The not eyeing Christ for strength weakneth our confidence in our approaches to God: If we could say as *David*. *Psal. 27. Thou said unto me, seek ye my face*, our next word with very much confidence might be, *Hid not thy face from me*. If a King endyt his subjects petition himself, the subject may be little feared, it shall be granted. The case is so here, when Christ is our strength in duties he as it were endytes our petition, and will he reject the bill he penned.

An other Use of the point, is our strength in Christ,

Christ, then make use of him for strength; Tell me said *Dalilah* to *Sampson*. where thy great strength lyeth. Know him for thy strength, and make use of him as such, many seek their righteousness in him, that seek in themselves their strength.

If thou shalt ask what shalt thou do in getting his strength forth-coming to thee? take shortly these rules to help thee.

*First*, Often lay before him thy inherent weakness and insufficiency for thy work, as *David* did often in his Psalms, *Hear me O God for I am weak*. Do thou as those who would have their Cloathes dried, they spread them out before the sun, and there comes heat from the sun that dryes them; spread thy weakness before him, this was the course the poor, blind, lame, took in the Gospel: They did cast themselves in his way with their blind eyes & lame leggs; he is no less compassionate now, then he was then.

*Secondly* Labour to propose right ends in thy desires of strength from him: Do not as *Simon Magus*, who would have had the gifts of the Holy Ghost, that he might become some great man. Our strength for duties is given; as noble-men gives their pages livay cloaths, that by them there masters may be honoured, not they; of him and for him are all things to him be praise, sayes the Apostle,

*Thirdly*, Take notice of the ordinary way how he useth to communicat strength to his people. I say the *ordinary way*, for there are many wayes he takes in his communicating influences to his people, but the most ordinary

way is , to make something look out of a promise , after reading some part of his word , which readily they have often read , but never discerned that into it before , as the old blind man who had a boy reading to him , the 8. Chapter to the Romans , & hearing the 1. *vers.* of it. *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* Hold , said he , I have often read , often preached on that verse , but now I perceive something in it I never saw before , & was filled with such joy , as he professed he never felt the like in his life ; It is very remarkable in Scripture , sometimes we will find the word which hath less aptitude to convert , sometimes have greater effect then that which hath a great deal more , as , to *Nathaniel* , 1. John , the word that Christ said , *behold an Israelite indeed . in whom there is no guile* , does not convert *Nathaniel* , though that was a sure proof of Christs being God , that he could say so much , but an other word , less apt , does it ; *I saw thee under the fig-tree* , thou art the Son of God , sayes *Nathaniel* . wait till he make something look out to thee , of some part of his word , & possibly even that thou thinks least of may be the chariot that conveyeth thy strength .

*Fourthly* , Be following thy duty with the strength thou hast till more come ; It is the Lords way to give his people strength when about their duty ; *I went down to the garden , to see if the pomgranats buded , ere I was aware , my soul was as the chariots of Aminadab* . It thou shall say , thou reads , prays , hears &c. & finds nothing conveyed by these from Christ to thee :  
Christian !

Christian! do not again, yea so long as there stands a command for doing of it, be doing it still; remember the answer Peter gave to Christ, when he asked him some meat; *Master we have toiled all night & caught nothing, nevertheless at thy command we will let down the net again,* & it had good succels. Though thy former working hath been but a toyling, yet while there is a command, let down the net again, & thou knowes not what the fruit of it may be.

The point, in the last place, affords singular consolation to believers, that their strength is in Christ; let thy discouragements be never so many, from thy duties, thy difficulties, or what may be, here an answer sufficient to them all. *Hanibal* the Carthaginian on a time sent out his brother *Mago* to view the Roman Army & when he returned, he told him the Roman Army were many thousands more then they were: Thou art mistaken sayes *Hanibal*, how many thousands counts thou me for; There is a great deal of counting in the strength of Christ, thy treasurer, If thou canst lift thy eyes to the Hills, from whence thy help comes. Thou art now like *Sampson* possibly in the way to his marriage to *Timnath*, there came out a young Lyon and roared against him, But the Spirit of the Lord came on *Sampson*, and he did tear the Lyon as he would tear a kide. The Lyon had not only a do with *Sampson*, But with the Spirit of the Lord, that came upon him. Thy adversary hath to do with the strength of Christ, against whom no weapon that is formed can prosper.



But I go to the second branch of the doctrine; That as our *strength so our righteousness is in Christ*. This point is much debated betwixt us and the Papists. What is controverted in it, I shall pass, and since it is the very heart of the Gospel, as it were, I cannot but regret, that we are so little in preaching it to you, and pressing it upon you.

I shall not speak any thing of inherent righteousness, which, otherwise excellent Mr. *Lax-zer*, hath advanced too high, in order to a sinners justification before God, And though he go far enough from the Papists, yet he goes too near the *Socinians*, in his asserting that faith justifies as it is a work, including love in the nature of it.

I shall only, in the Close of this Sermon, briefly set down what is necessary for you to know, and believe, in reference to Christs righteousness becoming ours; and shall do it in these four particulars.

*First*, I shall shew you that the best works of the Saints stand in need of imputed righteousness, to cover their defects that are into them. Secondly, That this righteousness is clearly to be found in Christ. Thirdly, Shall shew a little of the way how this righteousness becomes ours. And lastly, shall apply it,

*First*, That the best works of the Saints, I say even their best works, stand in need of a righteousness to cover their defects. There be three wayes how the godly stand in need of a righteousness without them. 1. When they do these things, which in their very nature God hath  
for-

forbidden. In which case, all will confess they have need of Christ, righteousness; *David* for his adultery, *Peter* for his denial of Christ. Secondly, When they do these things, that for their *substance* are commanded, but not in a *right manner*; as, if they pray, but not in faith: here is a great defect, which brings them under the need of the righteousness of Christ. 3dly. Suppose the work they do, be, for the *matter*, commanded, and also right in the *manner*, be done in love and faith, yet there is still a defect in the *measure*. It is not *perfect* faith nor perfect love; to which we are, bound by the law. Now this brings us under a necessity of Christ, since; suppose in our best actions, there is not a perfection such as the law requires, there is a sinful defect, and consequently need of a righteousness from Christ.

For the *second*, That this righteousness is allenarly to be found in Christ. 1. There is no possibility of it upon mans part: His active obedience is all debt to God, and his passive, although it should mount to an eternity of suffering, could not reach a satisfaction to God, for the defects of his active obedience. Secondly, Christs obedience is a most proper satisfaction to justice, it was his own: He restored more glory to offended justice then Adam and all his sons could take from it. Yea all the torments of the damned in Hell do not amount to any thing worthy to be compared with the merit of the sufferings of Christ. they pay their debt in farthings, but can never compleat the sume; and though they could perfectly satisfie,  
it

it would not merit. But Christ payed all in a lump together, and that which he payed was of infinit value.

*Thirdly*. How this becomes ours? 1. There is a legal oneness betwixt Christ and us: The debt is none, the solution one, and, in a forensick and legal sense, the persons are one: So that there cannot come another reckoning upon the debtor after the surety hath payed; this righteousness of Christ, being the righteousness of our cautioner, is imputed to us, or accounted ours, as if we our selves had satisfied.

*Application.*

*First*, Behold the great priviledge of believers, how defective soever their inherent righteousness be, their imputed is the righteousness of God.

*Secondly*, Labour to share in this righteousness: And for this, see thy need of it, and our righteousness is as an unclean thing.

*Thirdly*, Believe there is no more required to make it thine, but to accept it, and rest on it, on the terms as it is offered.

*Fourthly*, Do not abuse it: It is dreadful to turn the grace of God into wantonness: We ought also to be diligent, as if Christ had done nothing, and yet so denied to our diligence and so much in thrifing after this righteousness, as if we had done nothing our selves.

*Fifthly*, Improve it, there is in it a full sufficient ground to answer all fears and challenges: Our only consolation is grounded upon it. *Melander* in his *Joasia* hath a Story of a dying man to whom Satan appeared visibly in  
the

the room where he was lying, and setting himself down by him, told him he was come to writ up the sins of his life before him, and after he had written down several and read them over, writ next (said the dying man) for all these my cautioner hath already satisfied, and in him I am discharged, and therewith Satan evanished. What truth there may be in this Story, I know not; but sure I am; the only ground of our plea before God results from this righteousness, without it we are altogether undone. *Tutus est recumbere in Christum*, was *Bellarmin's* dying words; whatever he wrot.

## S E R M O N I.

On *Heb.* 12. 1.

*Wherefore seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, &c,*

**T**HIS *Verse* contains the application of the doctrine handled by the Apostle in the preceding Chapter. In which, from the creation of the world, to the times of the judges in *Israel*, the Apostle, by the experience of many believers, shews what great things have been brought to pass by faith.

The scope of this *Verse*, and of the Chapter, to the 14. *verse*, is to prets constancy, in adhering to the profession of faith of the Gospel, on these *Hebrews*, amidst the many tribulations they met with, from the experience of these worthies

worthies. And I know nothing more suitable to Gods present dispensations, and our condition, then to open the force of the Apostles encouragement in the verse to you; Which that I may do; In the words consider these two. 1. A brief abridgment of the doctrine delivered in former Chapter; *Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses*, secondly, An inference from it. *Let us lay aside*, &c. Of the first of these, in this Sermon: The other, to morrow.

The words in the first language, *νέφος μαρτύρων* *a cloud of Martyrs*: But here it is not put for such as did witness for Christ only passively, but also actively; especially they did testify the great things that can be brought to pass by faith; they are called *a cloud*, for their multitude: *Densum*, saith Calvin on the place, *opponitur raro* And they *compassus about*; There is an allusion to the pillar that guided Israel through the wilderness, that went before them in the day time, but this cloud *compasseth us about*, so that wherever we cast our eyes, in what ever estate, they may be in our view.

There be some questions stated by interpreters on the words, which I pass, not being of great weight nor suiting the present scope; I intend to take only one Observation from the words and handle it in this Sermon.

Observation. *That it is a great encouragement to patient running in our Christian course, that we are compassed with such a cloud of witnesses, as are from Abel in the former Chapter. Or more clearly, That the examples of the famous Worthies*

worthies under the Old Testament, ought to influence our Chearfulness in wrestling with the cross in our Christian course.

This Observation is the Apostles scope here, and we have the same Argument used by other Apostles, to press the same conclusion, *1am. 5. 10. Take my Brethren the Prephets, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.* The Prophets for an example! Let *Romans* talk of their *Camilli*, their *Fabricii*, their *Scipio's*: Philosophers, of their *Aristotle*, *Plato*, or *Pithagoras*: We are to take our copy from the Prophets, all of which have been eminent for patient sufferings. It is not my purpose to insist in opening what force there may be in example to induce use to patient sufferings: I shall briefly say only these things of it.

*First*, That example is not that which formally obliges us to patience in sufferings: The obligation results from the Law of God: His precepts, though there were no example at all, make patience our duty, we ought in this case to say with *Ioshua*, *Though all men should forsake the Lord, I, and my house will cleave to him.* But they are excellent encouragements to excite & encourage to obedience to the precept.

*Secondly*, They are encouragements suited well to mans nature, who is more led by his eye, then his ear: *What am I better then my Fathers said Eliab?* Can we look for more privileges nor the Prophets? Minors are ashamed when they cannot endure, what men of an higher order indures; such reasonings as these, suit better with our nature, then any precepts  
what-

whatsoever. I cannot here pass what a late Author. Doctor *Stillingfleet* hath written in a late Book for the Churches peace, that scriptural examples, except they be practises consonant to the principles of morall equity, or to some positive Law of God, have no force to oblige to imitation although they were Prophets and Apostles. This doctrine hath need to be better cautioned, then that author does; for if it hold true, in the latitude He delivers, he shall not only deprive the Church of several things constantly practised in it, which hath no other foundation at all but Apostolick practise such as Imposition of hands in ordination of Ministers, the keeping of the first day of the week for the Sabbath; But upon his principle, Apostolick practise hath no more force to oblige then Diabolick; For if what they do, be consonant to the principles of morall equity, or to some positive Law, as their confessing of Christ why may not we do the like? The Apostle thinks so, *1 Cor. 1. vers. 11.* But not purposing to insist on the force of example, since the Apostle proposes the example we are to imitate here under the metaphor of a cloud of witnesses, I shall (that we may the better find out what ground of encouragement we have from it) 1. Enquire what these witnesses does depone Secondly how valide their testimony is which the Apostle furnishes ground for, in calling them a *cloud*, and such a cloud, and a cloud *compassing* us about.

For the *First*, What is it that these witnesses does depone; that may be for our encouragement?



ment? And here I shall only pitch upon these things. 1. They depone what will be the lot of a Christian in following Christ. 2. What is his duty under this lot. 3. What are his fittest encouragements. *First*, They depone what will be a Christians lot in following Christ. They all depone that this will be the crosse; see in the preceeding Chapter, from *Abel*, who is the first of the witnesses, to *Samuel*, who is the last, and you shall find all their experiences witnessing to this. It is true, their crosses were of different natures, *Abel* murdered, *Noah* tossed with a deluge, *Abraham* to sojourn in a strange land, and *Moses* to be hid when new born, for fear of *Pharaoh's* Murderers: some met with the violence of the fire, some with the edge of the sword; some tortured, yet all met with some kind of cross or another.

But ye may say what encouragement is there in this part of these witnesses testimony? There is very much in it. For. 1. It takes away the opinion of the singularity of the crosse. 2. *ly*, It takes away the reproach of the crosse.

*First*, It takes away the opinion of the singularity of the crosse; The Apostle *Peter* proposes as an encouragement to the Christians to whom he wrote, *Think not that it is a concernng the fire tryal, as if some strange thing should fall you.* It discouraged even *Elijah*. *I alone am left, and they seek my life.* But when *Abel* killed; *Abraham* banished, *Isaiah* sawn asunder, &c. We are not left alone.

*Secondly*, It takes away the reproach of it. The cross usually carries with it in the esteem  
of

of the world, an challenge of guiltiness, you are an Hypocrit, said *Jobs* Friends to him, because so corrected. But when we see the righteous *Abel* murdered, & faithful *Abraham* so tryed, & *Moses* the Friend of God; Where is there place for this reproach? Beside, the crosse usually renders men outwardly despicable, and under the Old Testament, before Christ suffered, it was certainly (as many divins think) more reproachful nor it is now since Christ suffered. But among other things, this takes off the reproach of it, that such a cloud of witnesses did undergo it; *Am I better then my Fathers*, said *Elijah*: we are not the first that hath committed ship to the sea of affliction. So that this part of their testimony is eminently comfortable.

But *secondly*, They depon what is mans duty under the crosse. And this is also comfortable: There be these three things they depon to be mans duty, under it. in reference to affliction. 1. To prepare for it before it come. Secondly, To submit the determination of our lot to God, and follow his rule, though we see the cross before us. Thirdly, To believe and credit his promises: even when under it.

*First*, They depon of it as a Christian's duty to prepare for it ere it come. This *Noah* depons. *vers. 7. Bring warned of God he prepared an Ark to save himself and his Family.* Thus *Rahab* the Harlot, who received the spies, who perished not with them that believed not. *vers. 3.* Thus *David*, *Gideon* *Jephthah*, *vers. 5.* and indeed this is a very necessary duty in reference to affliction, lest it find us unawarise, & surprise us, crying *Peac, peace.*

*Second-*

*Secondly*, They depon it is mans duty to submit the determination of their love to God, and follow his rule. Thus *Abraham* went out of his own Country to a strange Land, on the call of God, though he knew not whether he went. Thus *Moses* choised affliction with the people of God, and despised the treasures of *Egypt*, & fled to *Midian*. Thus *Israel* passed throught the red Sea, *vers.* 24. And thus many others of them, and indeed this also is a very suitable duty to these who are afflicted, to subscribe God a blank, to writ down in it what he pleases, and though we see not what will be the event of his way to us, yet as one in a misty day, if we can have as much light as to see where the high way, he calls us to walk in, lyeth, that sayes we are about our duty.

*Thirdly*, They all depon, all this whole cloud of witnesses, for the usefulness of faith under affliction. By faith *Abraham, Noah, Sara, Isaac, Jacob* &c. did endure. It is not for nought that faith is called our victory, whereby we overcome the World & in this their faith, there are these three very remarkable: 1. The variety of conditions, as to the kind of the crose, was very great: Some killed, some banished, some long barren, some tortured; yet the duty they all follow is one, that is to believe. 2. The inducement they had to believe, was one in all of them, they considered all who he was that made the promises; *Noah* warned of God believed, *Abraham* called of God believed: even *Rahab*, who was one of the worst of them for personal faults, could tell the spies, *God will deliver us*  
into

into your hand; to consider the promises as proceeding from God, who is a Father, and so means honestly in them, & a Father Almighty who out of the ashes of *Isaac* can accomplish them; This makes them easie to be believed. 3.

Though all their faiths was not of one pitch yet all had comortable outgates by it; *Sarahs* was not like *Abrahams*, these who went through the red Sea their faith not like *Moses* yet all came thow as well as *Moses*, o that, if our faith come not up the hight *Moses* & *Abrahams* did, yet we may find the sweet of it under the croasse. *Sarahs* whole faith we can scarcely read of in *Genesis*, yet by faith she received a son. If you ask, what is this for our encouragement, that these with fles depone thete to be our duty? Surely very much: amongst many things, I name but these two: 1. Often, in times of affliction, we are benighted about our duty, one that can preach suitable duties to the croasse, & presse them on others in prosperity, yet will find his minde in adversary like a troubled fountain, where the mud is mixed with the clear water. Now to have this cloud of witnesses, by their testimony going before us, and having a road among the snow in a winter day, to us what an encouragement is it?

Beside *secondly*, though the same duty be prescribed us, which they depone, in the preceptive part of the word, for Christ bids us oft believe under affliction; yet to have them, after trial of what is commanded, deponing the usefulness of such & such a duty, what an encouragement is it? It is as if one should take a receipt of  
Phisick,

Phisick, & come to a sick person, & tell him, when my disease was as yours is, I tryed this portion & it cured me, this is very encouraging. And this leads to the third branch of their testimony, in which they depon what are the most excellent cordials under affliction, especially these five.

*First*, They considered what they were in themselves, who were called out to meet the crosse, *Pilgrims strangers* vers. 13. *these all did in faith, confessing that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth.* The crosse meets not a believer in his own countrie, but, like a dog, barks at a stranger; could we come to confess that we are *Pilgrims*, we would not stumble at a pilgrims intertainment.

*Secondly*, They did consider how much honour did arise from the cross in the way of duty, beyond sinful prosperity; thus *Moses* esteemed the reproach of *Christ* greater thenes then the treasures of *Ægypt*, which he could not enjoy without complying with the oppressors of *Israel*. The Lord sometimes states the case so to his people that they must either suffer or sin & in such a case the cross is their hiding place from sin.

*Thirdly*, They considered how useful their sufferings would be for the Church of God, after their times: This comforted: see v. 34. *They quenched the violence of fire, they stoppe the mout s of Lyons, escaped the edge of the sword.* What? How holds this true? I shall not dislike the opinion some interpreters have on the sense of that place, that their victory was as great by faith,

faith, as if they had quenched it, &c. But I like better their gloss, who think that their being devoured of the fire, they quenched it for others; that should come after them: The blood of the Saints is the seed of the Church. And when a believer looks on his sufferings, as that which may be a comfortable seed for others, as the blood of the primitive Martyrs was for us; It tends to make the cross very comfortable, and them cheerful under it.

*Fourthly*, They did frequently meditate on the glory to come: *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, were content to dwell in Tabernacles, they looked for a City that had foundations. *Moses* had an eye to the recompence of reward, the light mementary afflictions of this life being not worthy to be compared to the glory, that is to be revealed; the comfortable views of it, as of a sweet summer after an winter, & a pleasant harbour after a storm, how refreshing is it.

*Lastly*, In the mean time they had frequent intercourse with God: *Noah* warned of God, *Abraham*, called of God, *Moses* indured as seeing him that is invisible; all the rest will be like cyphers without their figure, that makes no number, if this be wanting in affliction.

Thus we have opened the first thing we proposed, what these witnesses do depon. But if the things they depon be false, & hold not true how comfortable soever they be, they are of no weight. Therefore in the second place, let us consider how sure & valide in law their testimony is, & to evidence this we shall *first* consider them as a cloud. Secondly, As such or so great

great a cloud. Thirdly, As a cloud compassing us about. For all the three, the Apostle sets down in the text for the argument, to prove the weight and validity of their testimony.

*First*, Consider them as a cloud & this interpreter think may be taken under a twofold notion, either as it is a Metaphor, signifying somewhat that is not expressed, or as it is an Allusion to the Lords way in conducting Israel thorow the wilderness in the day time by a pillar of a cloud. Now in both the two it is very weighty to our purpose. 1. As it is a Metaphor it imports a multitude, *Denjūm* (saith Calvin) *opponitur raro*. A cloud of witnesses is a multitude of witnesses; & this tends much to confirm the testimony, *In the Mouth of two or three witnesses shall every testimony stand firm*, saith the Apostle but here, not only two or three, but a great multitude, all uniting in deponing the same thing for substance, I know not if the Observation of some will hold true, but it is remarkable, if it do, that the number of Christians was yet never so great in any one age of the Church, as the number of Martyrs have been in different ages, under the Heathen, Arian & Popish persecutions. So, that is the first thing confirms the testimony, the witnesses are so many.

But secondly, Consider it as alluding to the pillar of cloud in the wilderness, it imports that they are witnesses purposely, called to depon for our encouragement. The pillar of cloud was for Israels conduct in the wilderness, as in this they were witnesses *Infalibly guided*. So purposely called to depon in our case, which adds not a



little to the validity of the testimony.

*Secondly*, They are not only a numerous cloud so purposely called, but they are *such* a cloud, *οσχυρὲς ἔχοντες* if witnesses be not faithful understanding men, their testimony is little worth let them never be so numerous. But they are *such* a cloud: 1. Of men eminently learned; *Noah* is reckoned by Philosophers among the Philosophers *Ante diluviani*, and some of them writ of him that he foresaw the deluge in its secondary causes. *Abraham* a famous Astronomer, *Josephus* writes many things of his learning. *Moses* learned in all the wisdom of the *Egyptians*. So were they eminently wise and prudent; and how in esteem with God, is evident from the testimony he records of them in the Bible, *Noah* a Phoenix in his generation, *Abraham* his friend and faithful, *Faithful Abraham. Gal. 4.* *Moses my servant* is dead *Jos. 1.* None with such a perfect heart as *my servant David*. Now a cloud of such witnesses, so learned, so wise, so eminently esteemed of God, so little tainted with earthly mindedness, in a word, such of whom the world was not worthy, how sure must the testimony be, deposed by them!

[*Thirdly*, As it is a cloud & such a cloud, so we are compassed about with it *περικειμενον*. There be in this, two things imported, the fulness of testimony and the clearness of it.

*First*, Their testimony is full: There is no case can be tristed with, but they testify the usefulness of faith in reference to it. If banishment, *Abraham* tryed that; if the wrath of Princes, *Moses* found faithful there; If barren-

barrenness, *Sarah* found it succesful ; torture or what else, this testimony reaches it.

*Secondly*, As it is full, so clear, we are *compassed with it* : They do not depon in ambiguous tearmes, *Dolus versatur in generalibus*, but so distinctly & clearly, as what ever doubts be about the meaning of some places of Scripture, yet who can question the clearness of their testimony to the usefulness of faith in tryals. In a word, they are a number of such, so excellently qualified, and deponing so clearly, that that their testimony cannot choose but be looked on as valide and sufficient to confirm what they depone.

*Application.*

The practical part of this doctrine, and the most genuine use of it, is that which the Apostle makes in the second part of the vers. *Let us lay aside every weight*, &c. of which we shall speak afterward. Only at present, I shall press these few things from it.

*First*, Praise the Lord that we are not the first he hath trusted with affliction. There is a beaten road before us by a cloud of witnesses. He that did first put ship to sea, Poets could call him, *Ferrens ille*. But now a man of the least courage can go down in ships to the depths. It is very remarkable as some have observed, that there have been few or none eminent in doing service to God in their generation, either under the Old or new Testament, but have been also remarkable for suffering. *Are we better then our Fathers?*

*Secondly*, Do not put a wrong construction

upon Gods dispensing of the crosse, possibly some in giving thanks for the work of redemption at such an occasion as this, are ready to stop and say, what mean the clouds that are gathering! I would see the outgate ere I praise. But suppose the worst thou canst imagine to befall thee, there is nothing singular in it. Look to the cloud of witnesses before thee, If this suffice not, look to what is in the following vers. *Looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith who endured the crosse.* What stone hath he laid in his Temple? that hath not been hewed by affliction? And wouldst thou be singular?

*Thirdly*, Encourage and comfort thy self from the example of the cloud of witnesses, there be especially these three things in this cloud very comfortable. 1. Thou mayest see that God will sometimes most sharply chastise them, whom he intirely loves, *Abraham* was his friend *Moses* he spoke with him face to face, *David* a man after his own heart, and yet all of them trusted with affliction. If thou shall go and conclude the contrary from the Rod, thou shall offend against the generation of his children, *Psal. 73. 15.* Secondly, Thou hast this encouragement from the cloud, that though the Lord hath even a controversie, even against his choicest servants, yet usually he trusts their sufferings, not for their sins, but upon some account he is concerned in himself. Thus *Abel* dyes for his sacrifice, *Abraham* suffers in following the rule and command of God, *Moses* his reproach is the reproach of Christ. There were quarrels enew God had with *Abraham* and *Moses*

*Moses*, that he might have stated their sufferings upon; God usually brings ungodly men to sufferings for their adulteries, murders &c. But the marks his people bears about in their bodies, are the marks of the sufferings of *Christ*. Souldiers glory, If they have the marks of the wounds received in the service of their Prince; this is thy honour if thou be a generous souldier. But Thirdly, In this cloud we have this encouragement, that we see many tryals bitter in the beginning, may prove very sweet and comfortable in the event. *Abrahams* offering of *Isaac* was so, *Moses* despising the treasures of *Egypt* and choosing affliction with the children of God was so, *Rahab* the hazard she run for the spies was so, and very often that which is matter of mourning to us in its beginning, is matter of praise ere it close, *Prima crucis scena, tragica postrema leta*, said pious *Bernard*; the Lord uses not to suffer the rod of the wicked to ly on the lot of the righteous, & though he do, they find it Phisick, necessary for them, it will end in rejoicing. Fourthly, From this cloud of witnesses, learn to imitate them, and trace their footsteps under affliction: they followed the call of God, so do thou; they did not thrust themselves unnecessary forward to meet the cross, they were much in the exercise of faith, so do thou.

Some say, though this truth may suit the time, yet how suits it the present work of thanksgiving at the Sacrament? *Answer*, Well, for 1. *Christ* shut up his celebration of the first Sacrament of the Supper, with telling his Dis-

ciples of the cross *Verily all of you shall be offended because of me this night*. &c. So that we writ after our copy-Secondly, The consideration of our winter ought to make us so much the more careful in gathering of our food in harvest. 3dly. From this see what may be your lot in standing to what in the Sacrament ye have ingadged to God.

## S E R M O N, II.

On H E B R E W S 12. 1.

*Let us lay aside every weight, &c.*

**I**T is our great incouragement to have the example of so great a cloud of witnesses, holding out the tryed usefulness of faith to us under affliction. Now we are to enquire how we are to improve it. *Let us, saith the Apostle, lay aside every weight, and run with patience.*

Amongst other things this phrase tends to prove the Epistle to be *Pauls*, who frequently in his other Epistles alludes to the Olympick and pythick Games. So here, it suits well to his style. In these Games, such as were actors did shake themselves loose of what would hinder them.

*Abstinuit venere & Baccho qui pithia cantat.*

There are some would limit this weight to some particular, taking the following words as a limitation of the sin that so easily besets us; understanding by it, either original sin, which does indeed easily beset us; or our predominant sin, which easily masters us: But judicious *Eslus* on the place takes the words more generally; and,

and, though a Jesuit, yet very oft a very sound interpreter. And this seems to have been the mind of the Translators of this Scripture, who have rendered it, *every weight*, which was also the custom of the gamblers, to whom the Apostle alludes. What ever weight may be a hinderance, whither it be original sin, or our predominant sin, or what elsie soever, we are to lay it from us, so long as the race lasts, and not to take it up again.

But that I may come to what I designe from this inference, we may consider this part of the Apostles precept, *Let us lay aside every weight*, under a twofold relation. 1. As it relates to the words going before, and is an inference out of them, interred by an illiative *therefore*, having *therefore* such a cloud, *Let us lay aside*, &c. 2. As they relate to the words following, the *running of the race with patience*, and so an allusion to the Olympick Games. They contain an introductory act to our running. First we must lay aside weights, and then run, and in both relations I shall speak a little of them in this Sermon.

*First*, Then; Consider them as an inference, any at first view may think they are not a very apposit way of inference from what the Apostle hath commended so much in the cloud of witnesses, that which the Apostle hath commended in them, is their faith along throughout the former Chapter: And it would seem the inference, where the antecedent is, *Having such a cloud so eminent for faith*, ought to be, *let us believe*; and not this, *let us lay aside*, &c.

Some interpreters answer to this, that the Apostle, delighting to follow the Metaphor of the Olympick games, proposed the inference thus. But this answer is not sufficient to satisfy. They answer better that say, the Apostle supposes faith to be necessary in laying aside weights. For, as *Abraham* by faith did shake off the intanglements in leaving his country, & *Moses* by faith the intanglements of *Pharaohs* Court, when he choosed the reproach of Christ, & *Rahab* when she received the spies. So the Apostle proposing that a Christian is to lay aside the weights; understands, by *faith*, & it is more rethorical then if he had expressed it. Taking it then for a thing supposed, we shall briefly speak a little to this.

*Observation, That the only effectual mean, for laying aside intangling weights in our Christian course, is faith.*

Thus all the cloud of witnesses mentioned in the former Chapter found it. There betwixt two branches of the point. 1. That faith is an effectual mean for shaking off weights. 2dly. That without faith it is impossible to do it, For the Apostle supposing it, giveth ground for both;

For the first. To shew the influence that faith hath upon our laying aside of weights, I shall desire these five things may be considered.

*First*, Faith helps to crucify the lusts and inclinations of the heart to these intangling weights; it is not any intrinsic excellency in these weights that makes them so ill to be laid aside, as the strength of our inclination after them: As it is not the excellency of the bait that tends



tends so much to intangle the bird in the net, as its own inclination to it. Now, faith takes away the fewel that feeds this fire. It crucifies these inclinations, and purifies the heart from them, *Acts 15*. God is said to *purify the heart by Faith*.

*Secondly*, Faith doth not only crucify our inclination to these weights, but it discovers, them to a Christian in their native colours: Usually these things that prove weights in our Christian course are so painted, that they appear far more beautiful then they are, and so worse to be laid aside. But faith unmasks them, so that a believer can speak of them in a far other strain then another can do. See how *Paul* speaks of *Agrippa* and *Bernice*, sitting in the judgement-seat on him, *Act. 25. 23*. And when *Agrippa* and *Bernice* were come with great pomp, *Κατα πολλης φαντασιας*, with a great many *phanfies*, so looks *Paul* on all their pomp. And on his external priviledges, *Phil. 3*. *As dung*; *σκυβαλα quasi κοτι βαλλον*, to be casten to dogs. And what ever account *Egyptians* made of *Pharaohs* treasures, *Moses* saw them to be but the pleasures of sin that indured for a season. Now when weights are thus decerned, & thus they are by faith, how easie is it to lay them aside?

*Thirdly*, Faith posselles the soul with assurance of Gods care and provision of these things that often prove weights to us. It is a remarkable word, *Heb. 13. vers. 5*. *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have, for he hath said, I will not leave thee nor forsake thee*. There is enough for

faith to be content upon, if it have, *He hath said*, Not that it destroyes necessary means, *Add to your faith vertue*, 2 Pet. 1.7. But when any thing becomes a weight to impede our running in our race, the soul that believes can lay it aside, & trust God for what may be convenient in that kind. Again, *The life that I live in the flesh is by faith in the Son of God*, Gal. 2. vers. 20. *He loved me & gave himself for me*, & for temporal things, *I will live by faith in him*.

*Fourthly*, Faith puts the soul upon higher designs than these weights can amount to, & so makes them easier to be undervalued, *Psal. 39. 6* See how *David* despyeth the intanglements of wordlings? *Surely man walketh in a vain shew, they desquyet themselves in vain, heaping up riches*. What is this a *vain shew*? How comes the Psalmist to insert this paradoxe? See him in the next verse, see him on a higher designe, *And now Lord what wait I for, my hope is in thee, deliver me from all my transgressions*. I am said the great *Alexander*, a King, & not a merchant, when *Darius* sent him an offer of many talents to return to *Greece* again; He told *Parmenio*, it might suite with him to take *Darius* offer, but not with *Alexander*. When a believer considers what an inheritance, what a marriage how excellent an husband, what sweetness of Communion, what wonder these weights be easily laid aside! and this is done by faith.

*Lastly*, By faith the strength of Christ is brought in, to help to lay aside these weights And thus it becomes easie. *I know how to abound Philip. 4. and how to want, I can do all things through*

*through him, that strengthens me.*

As all these wayes shew how useful faith is for laying aside these weights, so in the next place, I shall shew that without faith it is impossible to lay them aside. For.

*First*, The inclination of our heart is so strong to these things, that often prove weights, that without faith it is impossible to subdue it: and consequently, to lay them aside. All the light & strength of natural induements could never bring Heathens to mortification of these weights. Even *Seneca*, who gave the most excellent precepts of any Heathen, yet was eminently tainted with earthly-mindedness. Yea even such as have some measure, yea a great measure, of faith, have work enough with it. It is conceived by many learned, that Satan tempted Christ with all the Kingdoms of the earth, *Matth. 4.* because he knew it was an allurement by which he prevailed with the most eminently Godly.

*Secondly*, Without faith a man cannot put any thing better in the place of these weights, and therefore can hardly lay them aside. An unbeliever, of his riches must say, as *Micha* of his Idols. *Ye have taken away my gods, & what have I more.* But a believer, if he lay aside these, he can say as *Alexander* the great did when he had divided all his Kingdom among his followers, & one asked him, what he reserved for himself, he answered, *Hope.* They have hope as an anchor both sure & fast: Yea not only hope, but also something to rejoyce in for the present *Hab. 3. v. 17.* *Although the fig-tree should not blossom, &*

*the*

*yeeld her fruit, and the labour of the olive should fail, yet I will rejoyce in God, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

*Thirdly*, Corrupt reason in man is no small friend to the retaining of these weights, prone to suggest, even in a Peter, *Master purty thy self.* The remarkable History of *Francis Spira*, written by *Skidan* and others is very remarkable to this purpose, who, being allured by his relations and possessions, did renounce the faith he had formerly owned, and how tragical his end was all known. Now when reason appears such a friend to the retaining of these weights, if there be not faith to counter-balance, who can lay them aside.

*Application.*

See the way then, and the only way, how to get these weights laid aside, even the same that influenced *Noahs* building of the Ark, & *Abrahams* fors. king of his country. Many purpose and resolve against these weights, but, as without faith it is impossible to please God, so, to lay these weights aside.

Secondly, Look well to thy faith, which in this case I may say, as the Apostle sayes in another case, *Eph. 6.* thou art above all things to take to thee. And in order to this I shall only press these three things.

First, Take heed thy faith be not counterfite: For first. There is nothing keeps one further off from the truth of faith, then the counterfite of it: As the counterfite Religion *Jeroboam* set up as an engin to keep the tentribs from the true Religion which was at *Jerusalem*; So Sa-  
than

than sets up in many a counterfite faith, which keeps them from seeking after the truth of it. Beside, if thy faith be counterfite, all is but counterfite, thy prayers, thy hops; thy praises; Thy laying aside of weights will be but a seeming act, it is with our faith, as with a marriage, if a woman be not married all her children are bastards; therefore look well to it, that thy faith be not counterfite.

*Secondly*, Be training and exercising thy faith. We use to walk upon the credit of the promises, as one beginning to walk upon the ice, when first they set their foot on, ay fearing it crack under us and we fall in: whereas, if there were a training of our selves to exercise faith on the promises, on things of dayly occurrence, as to be acting it for our meat, for our rest at night, & see what account God gives of us in the morning, for our health, for our inward peace; we should come the more easily, on the credit and faith of the promise, to lay aside weights that impeded us in our race.

*Thirdly*, Put forth a Acts of faith on Christ, not only for justification, but for sanctifying graces. Usually all that are not Papists know that they must be justified by faith alone; but for sanctification, a part whereof is the laying aside of weights, we labour to wring it out of our own hearts, as if Christ were not the author and finisher of it, and as if we did believe with *Arminians* that Christ had not died to purchase faith to us, but it were in the power of a mans will to believe or not believe, accordingly as he uses his natural induements: but this being done,

done, the laying aside of weights becomes far more easie, yea and pleasant, to us.

But I come now to consider this precept of laying aside weights, as it relates to the words following, *Let us run with patience*, in which consideration, by an allusion to the Olympick & Pithick games, they contain an introductory act to the running of the race first The weights must be laid aside, and then run, and thus they afford this.

*Observation. That the example of a cloud of witnesses will not be sufficient to influence our running our race with patience, if there be not mortification to both outward and inward impediments.*

Both are comprehended under weights here, and both must be mortified, it being usual in Scripture to exprels mortification by this pharle of *laying aside*. 1 Pet. 1. vers. 2 Jam. 1. 21. I shall briefly only prove the point & apply it. For profe of it Jam. 5. 10. *Take my Brethren the Prophets for an example, who spoke to you in the name of the Lord, of patient sufferings*; But will this suffice? No, the Apostle thinks fit to add, *be patient Brethren, stablish your hearts, grudge not*. Importing that if there be no more but examples, though even of the Prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, it will not do the turn, if there be not some work upon the spirit of a man himself.

It is indeed an undeniable truth, examples are of excellent use in our Christian course *sunt nonnulli*, said holy berna d *quos ad amorem patrie plus exempla quam predicamenta succendunt*  
But

But there are two things in the words , to pass many other , that I shall only make use of , to evince this , that beside the example , there must be a mortifying & laying aside these impediments. 1. They are *weights* 2. They are *sins* that easily , & so easily beset us. And in both , the Apostle intends arguments to lay them aside.

First, Consider them as *weights* ; so they are very unsuitable to a race ; if they be not mortified they produce two things , very unsuitable for a race , they weaken us , & they intangle us.

First, They *weaken* us. Our strength , how little soever it be , must be divided betwixt our journey & our burdens : it is not all to be spent upon our race *Peregrinus* thinks when *Abraham* was about to offer *Isaac* he did not tell *Sarah* , for as strong as his faith was , there was work enough for it , though *Sarah* were not ingadged against him. Whereas he that layes aside these weights , is not so overlaid , nor hath he his strength divided. It was a remarkable answer , *Erasmus* reports in *Apophthegms Diogenes* on a time gave to *Plato* , *Plato* had become somewhat less in reputation , because he had gone to *Sicily* to the Tirant *Dyonisius* , & received great gifts from him , & on a day coming into *Diogenes* Cell , he found him dining on roots ; whereupon *Plato* said to him , if thou couldst please *Dyonisius* , thou needed , not eat roots : *Diogenes* replied , if thou couldst eat roots thou needed not please *Dionisius*. *Diogenes* thought *Plato* weakned by this , he could not eat roots. He that is mortified to wordly pleasures , hath his strength intire for his race.

Beside



Beside 2dly, As they are weakning, so they are exceedingly *intangling* no man that wareth sayeth the Apostle 2 Tim. 2. 4. *Intangl'eth himself with the affairs of this life*; εμπλκεται, It is a word borrowed from a bird that is intangled in a net, these weights are as a net round about us, that by fighting we cannot win out of. So that it may be said of such a person, as Pharaoh said of Israel, *They are intangled, they are intangled*; and how unsuitable is this for a race?

But let us take the Apostles other expression, they do *easily beset us*, and in this two things I would open. *First*, Shew you that sin does easily beset. *Secondly*, What force is in this to press the laying it asid.

*First*, That it easily besets, is evident from these things.

1. How easily does the tentations to it take in thee, as sparks lighting among tinder? *immediately*, or *straightway he went after her*, sayes Solomon, of the young man and strange woman. God must draw us, we pull as it were against him. But any temptation kindles us as it were in an instant.

Beside 2dly, sinful suggestions, they set so insensibly into the minde, that even when we are in most spiritual duties, ere we are awar we find our selves overcharged by them, As Junius complained, that often when he was in prayer, his mind was in the gallery he had seen in Rome. Yea even after we have resolved and purposed against them, yet, like *Hophni* and *Phinchas*, we are ready to commit uncleanness in the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it is no wonder,

wonder, there is no sin but it hath a party within us : We cannot say , as once our captain did, when we are to encounter tentations, *The Prince of this World cometh against me , but he hath nothing within me.* It hath much within us , and therefore no wonder it easily beset us.

*Secondly*, Now there is a great deal of strength in this argument, to press us to lay it aside.

For 1. That it *besets* us, hath the force of an argument into it. περιστατον, as the old latine renders it, *circumstance*, Beza, *circumcingens*. It is as a belt round about us, or, as a wall standing about us. If we look before us, or behind us, or what ever way we will, we will find tentations from it ; in what ever part of our race, we will find a weight from it. Therefore mortify it : otherwayes, if called to active obedience, or passive, it will hing on, for it besets us.

*Secondly*, As it besets us, so it *easily* besets us; ευπεριστατον, this hath the force of another argument in it. If we mortify not, though our argument from examples were never so great, we may conclude , tentations and corruptions will surely hinder us in our race , for they beset us, and easily beset us; we have good reason of taking heed in casting sparks among flax, since it so easily kindles : And no less in laying aside and mortifying corruption , since in our race it so easily besets us, being as a wall built round about us.

### *Application.*

*First*, It reproves those who, in order to their encountering tryals, labour for no mortification of weights and sins that easily beset them. For

1. The

The want of this makes a man together unmeet for difficulties, in his race, *2 Tim. 2. 21. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel of honour meet for the masters use.* He that is not purged, is like Green wood in the fire, when difficulties in his race occur. It tries and smoakes, but burns not. 2. From the not laying aside these weights, it flowes, that the allurments to decline the Crosse are to taking: the Apostle *vers. 35. preceeding Chapter,* speaks of some, who being *tortured, would not accept deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.* They accepted not of deliverance, they did not like the World so well, as to be willing when they were so near heaven to be content to come back to it again, they had layd aside these weights. It is a remarkable History: *Beza* writs of the noble Marques of *Vico, Galleacius Caracoliolus*, who being converted at a Sermon by *Peter Maier*, relolved to leave *Italy*, and all his possitions, and come to *Geneva*, and live with *Calvin*; and when his Wife did hang about his armes and some of his Children about his leggs, some lay down in his way, and all weept on him to perswade his stay with them, yet he shook them all off, calling to mind that of Christs, *He that hateth not father and mother for me, is not worthy of me.* 2. He that hath not layd aside these weights, is intangled, and hath not the free use of his life, as a *Byas boul*, he must incline to the side the weight lyes on. *Marcus Cato*, it was said of him, *Iste solus scit vivere*; he had retired himself from *Rome* to his Countrey house, that he

he might be free from the noyse of the City. None knew how to live, but such as lay aside these weights.

*Lastly*, The point serves to stir up all to this work of mortification to these weights; who would run their race with patience, rest not on light to make the cross appear rational; Some may discourse well in Sermons of the necessity of affliction, of the usefulness of it, the encouragements under it, from the example of Christ, and the cloud of witnesses: but when it comes to the tryal, such are found to be like a man that hath a good eye but a lame leg, whereby he is unfit for his journey. That we may be the better fitted to lay them aside, I shal briefly offer these few directions, and so come to a close of this Sermon:

*First*, Consider the Lord only calls thee to lay them aside, when they prove weights, How excellent soever the merchant's goods be, yet when they overload the ship, and the retaining of them threatening his life, he will cast them over-board. The necessary use of the creature comforts he allows, but when the retaining of them lyes in the way of thy salvation, how reasonable is it then to lay them aside! As the *Martyr* answered, when one asked him, if he had no regard to his Wife and Children, yes, yes, said he, I esteem any of them more then the Duke of *Brunswick's* estate, but for Christ I can quite them all.

*Secondly*, If we add to this, to how much Christ was denied, and how much, (for a while) he layed aside for us, *He thought it no robbery*

robbery to be equal with God, yet made himself of no reputation, Phil. 2. 7. 8. 9. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners that ye faint not.

*Thirdly*, Be dayly accustoming thy self to a work of mortification to these weights. It was nothing strange to hear *Paul* say at one time: *I am ready, not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem, for the name of Christ*; when at another time he could say, *I protest by my rejoycing in God, I died dayly*. He that is dying dayly, cannot choose but be ready to die when called to it. Christians ought to be doing as potters who carry loads, ere they be laid on, taking a lift of them, and seeing how they weigh, forecasting how it will become them to leave such enjoyments: as *Mr. Bilney* tryed his finger in the candle before he came to the fire.

*Lastly*, Often ponder how abundantly God is able to recompence any thing he calls thee to lay aside upon his account, *Moses* did run from the court & treasures of *Egypt*, He had an eye to the recompence of reward, how much toyl- ing will the sweetnesse of gain make a man endure? Here is a recompence of reward.

## S E R M O N

Oh Matth. 5. 20. *For I say unto you, except your righteousness shal exceed the righteousness of the Scribes & Pharisees, you shal in no case enter in- to the Kingdom of Heaven.*

**T**Hese words are a part of that excellent Ser- mon *Christ* preached on the mount. The scope of the whole Sermon overturns the error

error of the *Antinomians*, who teach that believers are freed from all obligation to the obedience of the Moral Law: in the 17. verse, He taxes the folly of their thoughts, who thought He was come to destroy the Law, & by three strong Arguments, presses that obedience to it, is still, & will be still required of men. The. 1. taken from the immutability of the Law of itself. *Heaven and earth shall passe away, but one tittle of it shall in no waies passe till it be fulfilled.* Another taken from the great advantage shall redound to men by keeping the Law, in the proceeding verse, *They shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.* And 3dly, in the words read taken from the danger of not being more exact, in obedience to it then the Pharisees & Scribes were, *They shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

In the words, we have a doctrinal truth, and the confirmation of it: the doctrinal truth, That except our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The confirmation of it, *I say unto you.*

In the doctrinal truth, there are two things to be cleared, what is meant by the Scribes & Pharisees. and what by their righteousness. 1. A Scribe is a name of Office, whereof some were civil as *Shimehai*, *Ezra* 4. 9. Some Ecclesiastick, who were interpreters of the Law, such was *Ezra* himself & such are meant here; they were also Priests, therefore *Ezra* is called both a Scribe & a Priest, *Nehem.* 8. 9. A Pharisee betokeneth a Sect, not an Office; They had their

there name from separation, not from interpretation, as some would have. There was three sorts of Sects among the Jews. The *Essen's*, who were like our Popish Monks, living in profession retired from the World, of whom *Josephus* relates many things. The *Sad-duce's* were another sort, they expounded the law according to the Letters and Syllabls, and denyed the resurrection of the body. And these *Pharisees* were in highest esteem among them, they interpreted the Law according to the traditions they had received from the Fathers. Many things are written by many, especially *Josephus*, of these, which I shall not need here to repeat.

For the righteousness which is twice mentioned in the *verse*; for clearing this, take notice that there is a two-fold righteousness mentioned in Scripture; one, *imputed* righteousness, which is wrought by Christ for the believer; an other, *imparted*, which is wrought by Christ in the believer. The first, is the righteousness of our justification. The *Second*, Of our Sanctification. Some would have the meaning of your *righteousness* in the words to be understood of Christs imputed righteousness. It is true, our righteousness in this sense, exceeds not only the righteousness of the Pharisees, but of *Adam* before his fall: But to understand it so here, suits not to the scope of the place, which is to presse more exact holiness, and obedience to the moral law, then the Pharisees had: Therefore we understand it of a righteousness of sanctification, with best interpreters on the place.

But



But here there seems to be some seeming foundation for a very dangerous error, which some of late, who profess to abhorre the way of Papists; have appeared very violent, for if there be, say they, in man an inherent righteousness, or holiness, that the Scripture calls righteousness, why doth it not in some sense justify? *Posita*, say Philosophers, *causa formalis ponitur etiam effectus formalis*. But the truth is, the way they take in this, is so contrary to the Scripture, which speaks of our righteousness, as an unclean thing, it is so derogatory to Christ establishing a righteousness, besides, whereby a sinner is just before God, it so exalts proud man; and (in a word) the difference betwixt it and the way *Socinians* take, (who talk of the imputation of faith *in sensu formali*, for a mans justification before God) is so small, that it is justly abominat by all orthodox and as for the name *righteousness*, on which they build so much, why may not they also on this ground plead for the justification of the Pharisees before God? For their way hath also the name of righteousness. But leaving this debate; the meaning of the words briefly is, that except their holiness was more exact then the Pharisees, who pretended to very much, they could not enter into Heaven.

I shal only take one Observation, which is the very words of the Text.

Obser. That except our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees we can in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

This

This truth being the very words of the Text, & so a doctrine which even an *Anabaptist*, who admits not of consequences would admit of; We need not seek after other Scriptures to confirm it.

Only for confirmation of it, we shal a little consider the proof brought in the verse it self. *I say unto you*, there be three proofs divins usually bring to confirm any truth: 1. Scripture. 2. Reason. And 3. Authority. We have all the three concurring in this point, *I say unto you*, all that Scripture resolves in what God hath said, either by himself immediately, or by the penmen whom he hath inspired: And there is no reason to prove a theologicall conclusions like that, however Schoolmen have laboured to turn up the body of Divinity into *Aristotles* principles, laying axioms & maxims of natural reason, to demonstrat Theologicall conclusions by, yet this is the *primum credible* in Divinity, *Deus hoc dixit*; & a conclusion stands only then firm in divinity, when ultimately it resolves in this. *God hath said this*. Yea, these things that are esteemed parts of divine truth, & have no other foundations but from Pops, Decretals or Canons of some Councils, are conclusions that can never be resolved into the principles of Divinity. Yea, 3dly, There is no authority like unto this, if it were never so ancient, yea if all antiquity unanimously conspired in one, it is but as the dust in the ballance, that cannot weight down this. *I say unto you*. He is our King, he is our Law giver, & his dominion is so absolute, that though there were no other reason, yea, though

though they were never so many appearances of reason, against what he hath said, as in the Doctrine of the Trinity, or Resurrection of the Body, yet we are to silence reason, & rest upon his naked authority. So that in this, *I say unto you*, the point is fully confirmed, both by Reason, Scripture; and Authority.

Yet ere I apply it, for clearing of the point it shall be necessary to enquire a little wherein the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees failed, that thereby we may the better know wherein we are to exceed them, & what righteousness is required, ere we can enter into the Kingdom of heaven. There be especially two things in general, wherein the righteousness of the Pharisees failed, & a righteousness falling in these two, makes it impossible for one that hath no more to enter into the Kingdom of God. **1.** There was something they omitted; & did not, that was necessary to qualify those, who enter into the Kingdom of God. **2dly**, The thing they did was defective in the qualifications necessary to qualify the righteousness of those who enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

*First*, There was something they omitted, and did not, that was necessary: Though they were exact observers of the external letter of the Law, yet they did not regard the spiritual sense of it at all, and consequently neglected all the parts of inward obedience to God, such as the mortification of inward lusts, or performing acts of inward holiness. Now a righteousness falling in this, cannot qualify

a man for entering into the Kingdom of Heaven. For, *First*, That righteousness that does not exceed the righteousness of Heathens, cannot be sufficient to qualify for the Kingdom of God, *Doe not even the Heathens the same*, is sufficient to cast our most specious performances. And how unblamably Heathens have walked, as to the external duty, the moral Law, any acquainted with the Histories of some of their lives may easily discern. Beside, *2dly*, There are none in the visible Church farther from Heaven than Hypocrites; what a multitude of woes find we in one Chapter denounced against them! And if they were not outwardly blameless, they should not be Hypocrites. *3dly*, To neglect the Spiritual sense of the Law, is to be partial in the Law, and to omit that wherein the soul and life of Religion consists. Heaven is a place wherein no unclean thing can enter, but he that is only outwardly blameless, is a rotten sepulchre, that is full of dead mens bones within.

*Secondly*, As they omitted the spiritual sense of the Law, so their righteousness was defective in the qualifications, absolutely necessary to qualify our righteousness, if we would enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Among many qualifications, in which their righteousness was defective, I shall insist only upon these two. *I.* It proceeded not from a right principle, a principle of regeneration; to this the Pharisees were altogether strangers, they not only wanted it, but did not so much as believe the necessity of it. Now a righteousness not proceeding from a principle of regeneration, as it

is not acceptable to God, so he that hath but this cannot expect to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. For,

*First* Christ hath, and that very emphatically declared no less himself, *John. 3. 3. Verily, I say unto you except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom.* It was spoken to *Nicodemus*, a Jew and Pharisee, not to a Heathen: He sayes not, except a man leave his scandalous out-breakings, but *except he be born again*, and he confirms it with a *verily, verily*, which hath the force of a very strong asseveration.

*Secondly*, Where regeneration is wanting, there is no union with Christ: Which of the two are first in order of nature and time, we need not enquire, seeing it is confessed by all they go inseparably together. Now the want of union with Christ, makes all our outward performances to be rejected. It is not fruit to God, if he be not first married to Christ, *Rom. 7. 4. 5.* as Children born by a woman who hath not a husband, Where there is not union with Christ, there is wanting the influences of the Spirit to assist in duties, a propitiatory Sacrifice to cover the defects of them, a Mediator of intercession to present and second them, what wonder then they be rejected.

*Thirdly*, When regeneration is wanting, the person is in an estate of enmity against God, the estate of nature being such, *Eph. 2.* All that passes betwixt God and such an one, are but such transactions as passe betwixt two enemies. What wonder then if the service be re-

jected, and the person far from the Kingdom of Heaven.

*Lastly*, The Lord judges not of mans performances, as one man doth of anothers only by the outward countenances, as *Samuel* did of *Jesse's* Sons, but he judges the outward performance by the inward frame. He can tell Israel when they draw near him with their lips, that their hearts are far from him, now the heart of an unregenerate, how naughty is it? Like the Temple in Christs time, a den of thieves. Lay altogether, and it will be discerned, that a righteousness not proceeding from Regeneration is not sufficient for our entering into the Kingdom of Heaven.

*2dly*, As these Pharisees their righteousness proceeded not from a right principle of regeneration, so it was not directed to a right end, the glory of God, but what they did, they did it to be seen of men. Now a righteousness not directed to a right end, is far from being sufficient to qualify one for the Kingdom of Heaven.

**For. 1.** If even our natural actions ought to be referred to the glory of God, far more our religious, **1. Cor. 10. 31** *Whether ye eat or drink, doe all to the glory of God.* If they want this, they want that moral rectitude that ought to be in them, & consequently cannot be accepted. But here it may be asked, if an actual respect to, & intention of the glory of God be necessary for our actions ere they can be accepted. *Ans.* Divyns distinguish a threefold respect to the glory of God, *habitual*, *virtual*, & *actual*. *Habitual* is, wheresoever is the habit of grace, such

such as love, faith, &c. But this is not sufficient in regard the habit may be idle, and consist with very gross sins, as in *David & Peter*, *Actual* is, when there is an actual intending of the glory of God. This can hardly be attained here, it will be our happiness in Heaven, but here it can hardly be looked upon as our duty, in regard there would be no room for other duties. If an artificer were still thinking on the end of his work, or a traveller on the end of his way, it might exceedingly mar him in other things, very necessary for that end. *Virtual* is, when an action is done in the virtue and force of some precedent explicit proposal of Gods glory, as a supream end: As every step of a mans journey is virtually designed to the end of it. Now this is simply necessary, & when any actions want this, they are not acceptable. Because,

2dly, The same action, which for the matter of it, is commanded by God, yet through the want of this, is reputed simply sinful by God. Take one instance for all to prove this. *Jehu* his cutting off the House of *Achab*, *Hosea* 14. *I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu*. What will the Lord avenge it? Did he not according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by the mouth of his Servant *Elijah*? Yes surely, the matter was such; But he did it to establish the Kingdom in his own hand without any reference to the glory of God, and therefore the Lord looks upon it as murder, and will be avenged on his house for it.

Beside, where a right end is not proposed to the



the honour of God, the whole work we do is accompted empty and hollow, *Hos. 10. 1. Ephraim is an empty vine, when He bringeth forth fruit to himself.* What, bringeth forth fruit, and yet empty? Yes, when it is to himself, and not to God.

Thus we see wherein the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was defective, and why those who have no more, cannot enter in to the Kingdom of Heaven.

*Application.*

There is a twofold use of this, we shall prosecute: One of Humiliation, another of Exhortation.

*Use First,* Is it so? It serves for terror and humiliation, to those whose righteousness comes short of the righteousness of the Scribes & Pharisees. How many are there in the visible Church, expecting the Kingdom of Heaven, who come not up the length, the Scribes and Pharisees did. Which that I may the more clearly evince, I shall offer these things to be considered.

*First,* The Pharisees were not outwardly scandalous: They did make clean the outside of the cup or platter: The Apostle *Paul*, while he was a Pharisee, says of himself, *Philipp. 3.* that he was, in regard of the law, blameless. They were, upon this account, compared by Christ, to painted sepulchres: Though sepulchres yet painted. But how many among us declares their sin as *Sodom*: What a continued tract of avowed drunkennels, swearing, uncleanness, and such like, which are not hid in corners?

corners? How doth many accompt sobriety needlesse preceisnesse? and think strange of others, who will not sin on with them into the same excess of ryot.

*Secondly*, The Pharisees were very exact observers of the Sabbath; it is true, they oftentimes quarrelled Christ, for doing works of necessity and charity, which were suitable to the Sabbath. Yet in the general it may be seen in their carriage, through many places of the Gospel, how exact they were herein. But among us, though we professe we allow not of books of sports for the Sabbath day, yet how few accompts it their delight, nor speaking their own words, nor thinking their own thoughts, yea when publick worship is ended, as if the Sabbath ended with it, so do we walk.

*Thirdly*, The Pharisees were very exact Observers, both of ordinary and extraordinary worship. He that came up to the Temple, *Luke 18.* could say, he fasted twice a week, they had long prayers. However the grounds of fasting were never greater, yet how little are we in humiliation this way; every family shal pray a part is a promise, *Zach. 11. 12.* And what a multitude is there, who weary not of swearing, & drinking whole nights & days, that accompt some few sentences of prayer nauseating & tedious? They are as one out of their Element in spiritual things, and therefore like *Pilat*, a start of it and away will serve them. *Pilat* said unto him, *What is truth*, and immediately he went forth to the Jews.

*Fourthly*, The Pharisees abhorred to converse

verse with the open flagitious, they would keep no company with the Publicans, It is true, they also foolishly quarrelled with Christ for it, who was among them as a Physician among his patients. But it is evident, themselves abhorred it; as being in danger to be infected by them, the Society of the Ungodly. It is true, we must go out of the World, if we would altogether decline it, yet how much unnecessary fellowship with them is there among us? And certainly there is not one thing, by which the Godly becomes more contaminat, and affords them more grounds of challenges, *Wo is me*, said David, *that I dwelt in Me'sech, and sojourned in the tents of Kedar*. It is as possible to walk on fire and not be burned, as converse with them and not be defiled.

*Lastly*, The Pharisees were much in almes-deeds, and Acts of charity. It is true, Christ tells them, they did it to be seen of men; yet they did it. And how exceedingly defective are we herein, though it be so much pressed in Scripture? And what is done herein, is lent to the Lord. Yet these who have enough to deboach with, know not what it is to be communicative to the necessities of the poor indigent members of Christ. All these, and many more might be instanced, to evidence how far short we come of the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and what matter of humiliation there is in it will appear, amongst many things might be brought from that, that is in the Text, they shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

In which I shall only offer these three things to be considered.

*First*, How great the loss will prove in being debarred the Kingdom of Heaven. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God!* What an excellent report is there made of it in Scripture? How glorious are the streets of it? How sure the foundations? How excellent the light? How noble the Temple? And to be deprived of all this, how humbling is it?

*Secondly*, Consider for what thou art not like to enter into it. Prophane *Eſau* sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage, are the glistering shewes of vanity, that abound among us, a sufficient compensation of such a loss? Does not this Rose grow out of a brier? And when it is grown, how soon doth it fade, and wither away? Art thou not like the dog in the fable, that did let the flesh go, that he might catch the shadow?

*Thirdly*, Consider, that such as enter not here must enter into the lake that burns with fire, and brimstone for ever and ever? Thou must either be within this Kingdom, or without, where are dogs and swine? There is no mid-place, let Papists talk of their Purgatories, or their Limboes what they will, thou must either be in Heaven or Hell. Now what matter of Humiliation is this?

*Use second*, Of exhortation Is it so, that our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees? Then Christian, labour by all means to have thy righteousness exceeding theirs. In order to this I shall speak to these two things.

*First*, Take heed of the defects that abounded in their righteousness, otherwise we can never exceed them. And that this may be the better done, take notice of these few defects in their righteousness.

1. All their zeal did run out on the lesser things of the Law, the paying tith of mint and cummin, & such like; which Christ told them were not to be omitted: But the greater, they did not so much as with their little finger once touch. There is a natural pronesse in our hearts to this. These things may be duties in their own kind, to attend ordinances, to be charitable, not to be scandalous: But if the greater, as mourning for sin; mortifying of it, believing in Jesus for pardon of it, be forgotten. all the rest are but as Ciphers without their figure, that make no number; how many possibly amongst you in this place, count your evidences only on such things as the Pharisee, counted upon? And are very hopeful of Heaven, though ye want the far greater things which they also wanted? Take heed of this defect.

2dly, They were much more zealous of human inventions, then they were of Gods Commandments. We find them often contending with Christs Disciples about some external purifications, & eating with unwashen hands, & such like things: & Christ tells them plainly, that they taught for doctrines the precepts of men. Now, if thou would exceed them in thy righteousness, take heed of this defect. It is strange to see what besil of affection some have for things of mans devising, as of a holy day,

day, a ceremony in worship, or such like, which pretends to no other Father, but some ecclesiastick Cannon: Whereas their affections like a kniff blunted in cutting sticks, are little or none in duties that are commanded by God himself.

3dly, The Pharisees, for as specious Professors as they were, yet they were meer Hypocrits. Christ thunders woes against them, because of their Hypocrisie. He describes them by no other name, but the name of Hypocrits. There is none's condition more dangerous and incorrigible then the Hypocrits: Publicans & Harlots shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before them? It is true, we read of the conversion of some of them, *Nicodemus & Paul*: But very few. Therefore, by all means take heed of Hypocrisie. Down right honesty here is our best Policy.

4thly, Though there Religion was but an empty profession, yet they were exceeding proud of it, *I thank God, I am not like this man*; though a believer, by the Spirit ought to discern things freely given him of God, yet he ought withall to consider, that there are some graces, the more we have of them alwayes we are the more humble; the more of faith, the more of repentance, the more of self-denial, alwayes the more humble; & when any comes to be puffed up with their Religion. they are too like the man who said, *Come see my zeal for the Lord*, of whom he threatned to be avenged.

Lastly, The Pharisees were generally great opposers

opposers and Blasphemers of Christ, in whom alone the remedy of their other sins was only to be found. And thus, like sick men, they did spill and cast over their Phisick. This was the cop-stone of all their other sins; possibly thou wilt say, herein thou out-strips them; I will desire thou wilt search again: Though Christ hath gained so much credit, as not to be openly blasphemed among us, yet see if these things be not yet in reference to him among us, which were among them.

*First*, The negatives, and omissions of which the Pharisees were guilty, they did not esteem him as God, they did not employ him as Mediator, they did not submit to his Lawes as King, and Head of his Church; If I could insist here, much of all these three is there amongst us still. May he not still stand and cry, *Ye will not come to me that ye may have life, I am despised and rejected of Men.*

*Secondly*, The Pharisees were bitter persecutors of his followers. *Paul* went from *Jerusalem* with Letters from them to *Damascus*, there is yet too much of this amongst us. We pretend indeed often other things, as the ground of our quarrels with his followers, but really the root of the quarel is here, that they are his Disciples, following his Laws and his Commandments.

Now, if ye would exceed their righteousness, especially labour to exceed them in a high esteem of Christ, giving him much employment, submitting to him as your King & Law-giver; & take on his yoke; & this will help with strength for exceeding them in all the rest.

SER.



## S E R M O N.

On Acts. 26. 28.

*Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou perswadedst me to be a Christian.*

THE occasion of these words is this King *Agrippa* coming to *Cesarea* to salute *Festus*, the Roman Deputy in *Judea*, where *Paul* was prisoner, is desirous to hear him plead before him, and After *Paul* had given a very rational account of his being a Christian; he could not be disobedient to the heavenly Vision, & shewed the consonancy of his Doctrine to the writings of the Prophets, *I know*, sayes he, *thou believest the Prophets*, yea he threaps it upon him, that he believed them; The words read continue in *Agrippa's* reply, *Thou almost*, sayes he, *perswadedst me to be a Christian.*

In the words, there be these things considerable, 1. A preface prefixed by *Luke*, *Then Agrippa said unto Paul.* 2. A confession; that he was *perswaded to be a Christian.* 3. A limitation or restriction of this confession, *ev ὀλίγω*, in a little only, or almost.

Who this *Agrippa* was, it will not make much for the scope I design to insist upon: He was the Son of that *Herod Agrippa*, who cut off the Apostle *James*, King of *Chalcis*, though afterward by his favour with the Roman Emperour, he obtained a larger tetrarchy: He had been brought up in the Jewish Religion, upon which account *Paul* looks upon him, as one that believed the Prophets. There

There are two words in the Greek very Emphatick, the one translated to *perswade* *πειθεῖν*, from *πεισμός*, which signifies a Cable-tow, it imports as much as by the force of *Paul's* discourse, he was drawn to Christianity, as with a Cable-tow; the grounds were rational, which *Paul* produced; the writings of the Prophets and the vision upon the way, that *Paul* told him of, drew him so strongly, yet he yeelds only, *ἐν δυνάμει*, *Erasmus* translates it, *Modica ex parte*, the old Latin seems to be better in *modico* in a little, and thus far drawn only to be a Christian.

The name *Christian*, which first the Christians had at *Antioch*; *Agrippa* mentions it; it was at this time, as it is still, very odious to the Heathens; But counted very honourable amongst the Christians themselves, seeing derived from the excellent Name of Christ. And certainly those who are almost ashamed of this so ancient and so honourable a name, and will needs be denominate from the Name *Jesus*, Jesuits are to be justly taxed, as if they were ashamed of the name Christian, which even in *Agrippa's* time was common to Christians.

And truly, it is very remarkable, how Jesuits themselves differ about the original and rise of this name of theirs, some of them, as *Ribadeineira* in *vita Ignatii*, tells us of a Vision made to *Ignatius* their Founder, that gave a rise to it, but though this Vision, which hath many ridiculous incredible passages, be talked of by several of them; yet others count it ridiculous, and therefore *Montaigne* the Jesuit repels it,  
and

and ascribes it to the Pope, which he thinks as infallible as if it had been a Vision from Heaven.

They are no lesse divided about the Etymologie of it, all of them agree not about it. And Protestants finding them jarring how to find out its original; some thinks a letter may be taken away, and in stead of Jesuits, they may be called *Esauits*. Some think a letter may be added, and they called *Jebusits*: But this controverſie not ſuiting this work, I will only touch the objection of *Gretſerus*, who tells us, ſince all Chriſtians are denominat from the Name of Chriſt, as here in the Text, why may not their order be denominat from the Name of Jeſus? *Hospinians* in his *Historica jeſuitica* gives him a clear reply to this, that believers being by faith being united to Chriſt, are partakers of his unction as the Oyl *Aaron* was appointed with, which rundo down on his garments: But we are not sharers with him in his ſaving his people from their ſins, from which is the Name Jeſus. But I cannot inſiſt on this.

Having thus cleared the words, I come to take the Obſervation from them, I purpoſe to inſiſt on, which is this.

Obſervation, *That though Chriſtian Religion ſtand upon moſt rational grounds, yet ſome are but almoſt perſwaded to be Chriſtians, even within the Church.*

This Obſervation is clear here, *Agrippa* was trained in the Jewish Religion, and he confeſſes he was drawn as with a Cable, tow, and yet almoſt, or in a little he was a Chriſtian only.

In

In prosecuting this point, it shall be needless to insist in prosecuting the rational grounds upon which Christian Religion stands. Which, among the Fathers, *Tertullian* & *Agustin* have done at great length, in their debates with Heathens. And in the reformed Church, eminent *Dupleſſe*, in his Book, *De veritate Christianæ Religionis*. Doctor *Jackson*, in his unreasonableness of unbelief, Yea, even among the Papists, *Parsons* in his Christian resolution; in these there are so many rational grounds set down, from the supernatural design of the Gospel; from the Penmen of it, from the miracles whereby it was confirmed, from the voices from Heaven, whereby it is attested, as are sufficient to convince a Heathen of the reasonableness of it.

Yea, if we should only take notice of that Argument, whereby *Agrippa* was almost persuaded in the Text, which Doctor *Hammond* hath amplified at some length, the conversion of *Paul*, what considerable weight is there into it? A young man in a way to persecute, among the Pharisees eminently learned, *Festus* told him he had too much of it, eloquent, so that the Barbarians judged him for that, one of their Gods, engaged not only by his former practises, but by his present resolutions, and engagement to the Pharisees to persecute the Christians; and yet by a voice from Heaven to be suddenly changed as to become a painful promoter of it, and to lose so much for it, and at last cheerfully to seal the truth of it with his blood, was it any thing strange that this did draw

draw *Agrippa* as with a Cable tow to be a Christian? But in those and many more, that are commonly brought, I shal not insist. Only in prosecuting the point, I shal propose these things to be followed. 1. I shal prove by an induction of some particular instances, that though Christian Religion stand upon so rational grounds, yet many are but almost, *ἐν ἄ γω*, Christians. 2. Shal enquire whence it is that it is so. 3. Shal apply the point.

For the *First*, There be these instances under which a great multitude, who are but almost Christians may be comprehended.

1. What a multitude deny many of the very fundamentals of Christian Religion, as the satisfaction of Christ, which *Socinians* do, the deity of Christ, as *Arians* do; the humanity of Christ, as *Nestorians* do. Yea, not to insist in particulars, any acquainted in the least, either with ancient or modern Histories, of the tenets of divers Hereticks, will find what a multitude of the fundamentals of it have been questioned, and denyed; and so they but almost perswaded to be Christians, who have denyed them.

2. Some though they deny not Christs satisfaction, yet they joyn together their own works and duties with Christs satisfaction, as causes of justification before God & so there is somewhat ascribed to Christ, but not all, they are Christians in some part; this is the common opinion and doctrine of the Papists & the practise of many Protestants. 3. Such are guilty of this, who leave, or embrace the Law of Christ, as it makes for or against them; the lesser duties; they go a-  
bour,

but, & if God will be content with what they can spare, they are content to give it him : But for the greater duties of the Law , or such as have any difficulty in them, with these they can dispense , except the shew of practising these can promote their interest. Under this Head what a multitude are comprehended !

Fourthly, Time-servers in Religion come also under this, to be almost Christians , who change their Religion with every spet & current, that set their watch according as the town clock they dwell into goes, these are but almost Christians. They are led by example and the practise of the multitude in their way , & not by any of the precepts of Christ.

*Lastly* , Such as profess Christ but are given up to the Common sins and scandalous out-breakings that Christ hath so straitly forbidden, having eyes full of adultery, their faces inflamed with wine , that declare their sin as *Sodom*, such sayes the Apostle, *Tit 2. vers. last, They profess they know God, but in works they deny him being reprobate unto every good work.* Now how many are there professing Christ , that are in one of those five but almost , or *in modico* persuaded to be Christians ?

For the *Second* we proposed , whence it is that ; since Christian Religion is so rational, so many are but almost Christians ?

For clearing this , 1. There be somethings that are proper causes of it , having a proper causal influence upon it. Secondly, Somethings that are but causes , by accident of it.

The *First* , That are proper causes of it , we shall name but these five.

*First,*

*First*, They may be a specious outward profession of Christ, where there is a great deal of Atheisme within. The whisperings of a natural conscience, & the fear of being defamed, may cause one take on a profession of Christ, & where Anthieism is, no wonder one be but in somethings a Christian : For 1. The fundamental principle that leads to respect the commands of any deity, is the faith of his beeing. If this be questioned, who will regard the command? *He that cometh to God, must believe that God is*; yea all the encouragements to duty, and all the threatnings against sin, are undervalued, where the faith of the beeing of God is wanting; If this be not, they are but as devised fables. Now take away the encouragements from promises & threatnings, and ye take off the pace, that which makes the wheels go. No wonder then but almost a Christian.

*Secondly*, Many are but almost perswaded to be Christians, because of the unbelief that the Scriptures have proceeded from God, & consequently cannot hold true : Notwithstanding they own a profession of Christ like *Gallio* who accounted the question of the resurrection only a question of Names & words. That the Scriptures are given by divine inspiration, and that they are surer then Heaven & Earth, are things not credited *Paul* moved a question, if *Agrippa* believed the Prophets. No wonder then he was but almost a Christian.

*Thirdly*, The heart in many is wedded to carnal interests, which lyes as a mountain in the way of their becoming altogether Christians.

Man



Man hath but one soul, and cannot leave it to two contrarieties in any benfil, the love of the World, and the love of the Father are inconsistent, like fire and water, they expel one another out of the same subject, desire of the World is so great, & men so intent upon it, that when Christ calls he is not heard, or in part only.

*Fourthly*, Most of the principles in man are contradictory to the principles laid in the Gospel. Let us take but a short view of some of them. 1. Self love is natural to man, *when thou does well unto thy self, all men will praise thee.* But it is one of the first lessons that he that is Christ's Disciple learns, *If any man will be my Disciple, let him deny himself* Secondly, it is natural to men to love ease, the Gospel puts him to labour. *strive, take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence,* Thirdly Nature teacheth men to esteem much of things present, as more certain then these that are absent and to come; it is contrary quite here, these things that are *present* are but shadows compared with those that are *absent*. *Fourthly*, Do & be happy, is a principle nature teaches to man, *what shall I do to be saved?* Renounce it; and trust in what another hath done to make us happy is taught here; a multitude of such contradictory principles are natural to us. Now where there is such contradiction in principles: No wonder many be but almost Christians.

*Fifthly*, Tentations from Satan & the World have a causal influence upon those, *If this Gospel be hid, it is hid to those whose eyes the God*  
of

*of this World hath blinded.* Though Sathan believe himself and tremble *Jam.2.* yet he knows it is much for the design he is advancing in the World, to keep men off from coming over wholly to Christ. Beside, man is a creature much led by example, and given to imitation, and often ungodly company, if they do not more, yet they blunt his zeal and keeps back from altogether being a Christian.

Beside these things which have a proper causal influence on many's being but almost Christians: There be other things that by accident occasion this.

As *First*, Many of the contents of the Gospel are altogether supernatural; *Mahomet* his Laws were suited well to mans corrupt nature; so were these which *Apolonius Lyaneus* gave to the Heathens: But here, if we shall either look to the duties or promises of the Gospel, they are altogether supernatural. 1. The duties are supernatural, as believe, deny thy self, take up thy cross, despise things present: the promises are also of this nature; if they were but such as these had under the law, such as if any man come not up to the feast of Tabernacles the rain shall not fall upon his land, how would this make many run to ordinances, who are nothing moved with the promises of being in Christ, joy in the Holy Ghost, and such like?

Beside *Secondly*, As the contents of the Gospel are supernatural, so must they be supernaturally discerned; as meer sensitive faculties cannot reach the objects of reason, a man cannot with his eyes see an argument, so such as  
are

are truly rational cannot reach what is purely spiritual without illumination from the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 7. The wisdom of the flesh is enemy against God, neither can it be subject to the Law of God*, for it is spiritually discerned.

From all these it comes to pass that many are but almost Christians. But I go to the Application.

*Application.*

*First*, Is it so that many are but almost Christians? It serves for humiliation to all such as are but almost so. I shall not insist in prosecuting this use in reference to such as are so in point of doctrine, in regard all of us own such doctrinal principles as lead us up to be altogether Christians, but shall follow it in reference to such as are so in point of practice; of how many may the Lord complain as he did of *Ephraim, Hosea, 7. 8. Ephraim is a cake unturned*, that is raw on the one side and baken on the other; In somethings, Christians, especially such things as may consist with their interest, but in other things denying it, especially such things as are most difficult, and of most absolute necessity. And that this use of humiliation may prove the more pressing, we shall offer these things to evidence what manner of humiliation is meet.

*First*, There is in resting upon the being almost a Christian a secret contempt of God. He that cuts & carves upon the laws of his Sovereigne, taking what makes for him, & rejecting what he pleases; contēnes the authority that enjoyed them: To do something at the command of God, and to reject others, must flow either from

from some apparent iniquity in the Law, which is a high reflection, or a despising of the authority that enjoyned it, and both reflect on God.

*Secondly*, To be in part a Christian, and not altogether, is a temper God loaths. This was the temper of the Church of *Laodicea*, which was neither cold nor hot, lukewarm, which hath some degrees of heat and some of cold; & he threatens he will spew her out of his mouth as one doth a thing his stomach loaths.

*Thirdly*, This puts a man to serve two masters, to be in some things for God, and in somethings for his enemy, *A double minded man*, sayeth James, *is unstable in all his wayes*, *διψυχος*, a man that hath a minde and a minde, he must be like *Israel* in *Elijahs* time halting betwixt two.

*Fourthly*, One may lose Heaven, though he do much for God, for not doing more; there are some things absolutely necessary for salvation, if we should be never so righteous in our dealing with men, yet *he that believes not is condemned already*, *because he hath not believed in the only begotten Son of God*. Now how lamentable is it to do much for Christ, and yet come short of Heaven for not doing more?

*Lastly*, This, to be in part a Christian, deprives a man for the present of the sweetest part of Christian Religion; the peace and joy promised in the Gospel is attained by performing the most inward duties of it, the neglect of which makes many find godliness a kind of *Labyrinth* to them, they are continually breaking

ing shells that hath no kirkel in them.

All these laid together evidence what matter of humiliation arileth from this, to be almost only a Christian.

*Use second*, Is it so that many are but almost Christians, then in the next place, labour thou to be not only almost but altogether a Christian. In this Use I shall first Open to you the scope I drive at into it. *Secondly*, Give you some directions for promoting it.

The scope of it is not *First*, To press you to eschew a mangrel hotchpotch kind of Religion, such as sometimes the Jews had of old, and the *Papists* have of late. I shall suppose our tentations, blessed be the Lord, shall not carry to so great an evil as this. Neither, *secondly*, Is the scope of this use to condemne that Christian moderation which in lesser truths may be sometimes very profitable, for the peace of the Church. Neither, *thirdly*, Is it to condemne all kinds of zeal in following our greater duties in Christian Religion, which ought alwayes to be regulated with wisdom and knowledge. Neither, *Lastly*, Do we suppose that a Christian in this life can reach an absolute perfection in his Christian course, without any defect at all. At these things this use does not drive.

But it drives at pressing these things. 1. To exhort all, while they are eschewing some sins in practice, whereby they become in part Christians, that they sit not down contentedly there, while they are practising others no less dangerous. While they eschew, for instance, scandalous breach of the Sabbath, they do not

con

contendedly practise hipocrisie, naked formality. Or Secondly, While there is the practise of some duties whereby one becomes almost a Christian, and not far from the Kingdome of God, there be not a voluntary neglect of others possibly more necessary. Or. Thirdly, To exhort the eshewing the practice of Christianity at sometimes, when there is the quite contrary at another time, ebbing & flowing in Christianity, as the Sea with the course of the Moon, serving times & occasions with our Religion, and not keeping an even pace, at these the point drives; & that we may be helped thus to labour to be not only almost but altogether Christians, I shall offer these following directions.

*First*, Christian, labour to be very serious in the performances of holy duties, be careful to joyn therein *attention of minde*, Ezek. 33. v. 32. *Singleness of heart*, Plal. 145. 18. *Intention of affection*, Rom. 12. 11. *Holy fear and reverence* Heb. 12. 28. The want of these makes even our Religious duties to be performed but almost as Christians: There is not that reverence of God in them, that delight, that intercourse & communion with God, which they that endeavour to be altogether Christians do attain. Therefore consider well the nature of God whose service it is; *His Majesty*, Mal. 1. v. last. *His Holiness*, Jer. 48 10. Consider the nature of the service wherein thou hes to do with him. Consider them as duties and a part of thy homage, not parts of thy Christian liberty. Consider them as priviledges, as indeed they are as talents of which thou art to give an account to God.

These and such like considerations may influence more seriousness in our performances.

*Secondly*, If thou would not be almost but altogether a Christian, Labour to get right thoughts of God, especially in these three. 1. In his *Al sufficiency*, Gen. 17. 1. And that would keep thy heart steady and fixed in Religion. God is our happiness & not the creature. And therefore whether more or less of the creature, it comes all to one, if God be ours. Next, the faith of his *omnipresence*, *Psal.* 139. 6. 7. This will awe us when we have secret opportunities and tentations to sin, Gen. 39. 9. It will possess with godly fear and reverence, 1 *Cor.* 11. 10. *It will comfort in afflictions.* *Psal.* 23. 4. Thirdly, Of his *universal providence*, extending it self to every thing that comes to passe, even the least things. *Math.* 10. 28. Beside the occasions we shall have hereby to adore the *perfections of God*, *Iob* 37. 14. *Psal.* 107. 43. *It will help to thankfulness.* *Psal.* 40. 5. And keep from *abuse of mercies*, *Hosea* 2, v. 8. To submit patiently to afflictions. 1. *Sam.* 3. 18.

*Thirdly*, To avoid this, be very careful not to neglect known duties. Usually in *Polemical* divinity, the plainest truths are least studied, because they are taken for granted. It is often so in practicals, our zeal spent on things that are most doubtful, when clear acknowledged duties are neglected, as it was with the *Jewes* *Micha* 6. 7. They were careful to enquire when they should fast, but neglected the duties of moral equity. The best way, as one observes  
well



well, to know more of the minde of God in what is doubtful is to be busy in doing what is clear, Jo. 7. v. 17. He is the best Christian that is most in the fundamentals of a Christians duty.

*Fourthly*, Every night take an account of the passages of the day, and examine what the strain of the heart hath been, what you have done, and upon what grounds, for what ends, what ye have neglected; hereby ye come to know what ground ye gain of your corruption, how long time ye ly in any sin unrepented of. This record or journal of our dayly walkings hath been the practise of many Godly men, as the writers of the records of their lives have mentioned; & there is nothing will tend more to prevent our resting upon being almost Christians.

*Fifthly*, Propose the perfect patterne of Christs life before you. It is true all the actions of Christ are not imitable; He was not a meer man, but God and man, and what he did as God or as Mediator betwixt God and man, we cannot imitat, but there are divers things wherein the Scriptures expressly propoles him as an example, as *love Eph. 5. v. 12. Meekness, Matth. 11. 29. Self denial, Pet. 2. 3. Patience, 1 Pet. 2. 21. Making it his work to do good, Acts 10. 38.* This serves not only for our example, but for our encouragement. There is nothing he calls us to but he did it, and is now crowned. This answers all the weight can be layed on any authority from men; Since his is one of the greatest, wisest, noblest that can be.

*Lastly*, If thou would indeed be above the  
G 2
being

being only almost a Christian, then labour to do all thou does in the name of Christ, the stresse of Christianity lyes in this, *Col. 3. vers. 17.* To eye the authority of Christ as commanding or forbidding what we are or are not called to, *Mat. 21. 23. John. 5. 43.* To do in the strength of Christ *Mark 16. 17. Acts 3. 12.* And to do for the lake of Christ, as for his honour. All these three are comprehended in doing in his name.

But some may say, if we labour to come up to so much exactness as these rules would carry us to, we have done with a mirry life in the world, and must go under the repute of Phana-ticks, and such like.

I shal, that I may not too far transgress time only in answer to this say one thing. Labour to know the true bounds of thy Christian liberty, not that ye walk to the uttermost extent of it, for the satisfying of your natural and carnal desires; but that you lay nothing in your Christian course to make Christs yoke weightier then he himself hath made it; from the want of the knowledge of this arises so many groundless censures of others, and casting them out of our charity, for the practice of things wherein Christ possibly hath allowed them a liberty. The knowledge of this would make us endeavour in many things our neighbour to his edification, *Rom. 15. 2.* In a word, if thou know not this, thy work in Christianity may be more burdensome then thou art awar of. So follow these directions, and by the blessing of God, thou may become somewhat more then *Agrip.*  
 pz who

*pa* who was only, *in modico* almost a Christian.

# S E R M O N

On GENESES. 22. 1.

*And it came to pass after these things that God tempted Abraham.*

THE History of *Abraham* his offering *Isaac*, is famous, both amongst sacred and prophane writers; The introduction to it or rather a compend of the whole History, we have now read.

The words have dependance on the former Chapter. in which we have *Abraham* treating with *Abimelech* as one Prince doth with another; and *after these things*, after the Lord had made him so great as to be sought to by Princes; *Iosephus* in the first Book of his *Antiquities*, Ch. 14. tells us, that before the Lord told him of the sacrificeing of *Isaac*, that He reckoned up to him all the mercies He had from time to time bestowed on him, and after these tempted him.

And in the tentation there are three particulars remarkable, First, The time of it: *Secondly*, The Author of it: And, *Thirdly*, The nature of it. The time of it, *After these things*. The Author of it, God. The nature of it was a tentation, *God tempted Abraham*.

*Pererius* the Jesuit on the place goes near to tax *Moses* as defective In not reckoning what age *Isaac* was of when this came to pass, and he spends a great deal of time in confuting *Abenezra*, who said, *Isaac* was but 12. years old;

and in proving the common opinion that he was, 15. But we not looking on this as material, it is sufficient the time is designed as it is *After these things*, after so many & so great mercies bestowed on *Abraham* God tempted him.

The only considerable difficulty in the words, is, to reconcile this place with that of *James* 1. 13 *Let no man say, when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God, God tempteth no man*, and here God tempted *Abraham*. Passing the flourish of *Jeſuits* in reconciling these two places, there is this one solide answer. There is a tempting by way of tryal, & a tempting by way of *seducement*. God tempted *Abraham* with the first kind of tentation, and *James* speaks of the second kind of tentations, that seduce and lead to sin, as is evident, first, from the word used by the Apostle there, *μὴ δὲ ἑσθ' ὁ πειρασὸς ὑμῶν* which usually is understood of tentation to sin, *δοκιμάζειν* being the proper word for the other tryals or tentations: Thus the Devil is called *tentator*, the tempter, *Mat.* 4. v. 3. and in the Lords prayer we pray that we may not be led *ne ducas nos in tentationem*, into tentations: Beside the Apostle in the Anthesis used in the v. sayes, *God cannot be tempted with evil, neither does he tempt*, must be relative to that same, *malum evil*, before mentioned. Now these tentations, as they cannot proceed from God, so for God to tempt by way of tryal is ordinary for him, in all afflictions.

There is one observation from the words I purpose to insist most upon, but shall name some few ere I come to it.

**Observa. I.** *That often great mercies are accom-*

*panied with great tentations and tryals.*

So here, *after these things*, Abraham was *tempted*. And the constant tract of providence from *Adam* to *Christ*, proves the truth of it, yea scarcely in Scripture one instance (which is rare in providential actings) against it. For

**I.** Great mercies are often accompanied with great abuses, and therefore no wonder followed with great tryals. The Lord does sometimes to his vineyard till he come to say, *What can I do more*, and yet *four Graps*, *Isai. 5*. What wonder then he pluck down his hedge! Beside all that receive mercies do not receive them with the like integrity, they fall sometimes as some drops of rain that only makes a thistle or weeds to grow, and therefore need of winnowing by tentations. Yea, *secondly* Usually those who are most in receiving mercies from God, are most invyed by Satan; ye shall find him in Scripture choosing out Gods greatest favourits and following them most with his tentations, such as *Job*, *David*, *Asaph*, *Christ*, and *Peter*; I shall not dwell on this point, only do not think God is out of the road way of his providence when he does this, whether to his Church or particular persons; It is an inlet to all apostasie to be pleased with nothing but mercies here away from God: If thou hath at his Sacrament tasted of *Abraham's* manifestations, it shall be strange, if after these things it come not to pass that thou taste of *Abraham's* temptations. Our Rose here must have thornes beside it: and therefore, say thou, shall we receive good of the hands of the Lord, and not evil also? And bless him in both. G 4 Obser-

**Observ. II.** *That it is very necessary when we remember or mention the tentations God exposes his people to, to remember also the mercies he bestowes on them.*

**Abraham** here, God tempted him, but it is after these things. So the Church at length in the *third* of the *Lamentations*, so **Jacob**, so **David Psalm. 44.** and there is good reason for it. For 1. This tends to keep up honourable thoughts of God. If there be nothing minded but the tentations, we are ready to count of him, as the man who had the one talent, austere and rigorous. Beside, this tends to keep us from fainting under tentations, as *Psalm 13.5.* It may be often the Lords quarrel with us in tryals; which he had with Israel at the red Sea, *Psalm 106.* *They considered not the multitude of his mercies but at the Sea, even the red Sea, they provoked him.* The first tryal they met with they forgot all the Lord had done for them in *Egypt*. Many pore only upon their discouragements, especially in tryals or at Sacraments, like one that would be brodding himself with the bryar of his rose & not smelling the rose it self. **Haman** was a fool to quarrel that **Mordecai** bowed not his knee to him since he was so much in the Kings favour, he might have despised **Mordecaies**. Whatever befall the Church of God or thy self, still remember it is after these things.

**Observ. III.** *That the tryals & afflictions are rightly looked upon by us, when we look upon them as tentations.*

Thus **Abraham's** tryal, here called a tentation,  
James

*James 1. 2. My brethren count it all joy when ye fall in divers tentations.* The Apostle means afflictions, but thinks fit to represent it to them under the notion of tentation, So *1. Pet. 1. 6. Though now for a season ye be in heaviness, through manifold tentations;* It was the cross was on them, but the Apostle calls them tentations: & there are several reasons why afflictions are so called, which are worthy to be remarked.

**I.** Our tryals often are nothing but tentations, our discourag'd Spirits creates fears and then tosses them so, that one in wrestling with their own thoughts will suffer more then another on whom the crosse is indeed inflicted. And here by the way, it is worthy to be noted, how often we are in the wrong to God suspecting, him for his providence, when in the mean time it is but conflict with our own apprehensions: Like *Hagar* who was complaining for the want of water, & yet close beside a fountain, but her eyes were not opened to see it.

Secondly, Trials are called tentations, because of the principal and chief scope of affliction is to winnow and try, *That the tryal of your faith, being more precious then gold.* *1. Per. 1. 7.* the Apostle points out their affliction there from the principal scope of it. And here I would have you take notice of these three things.

**1.** Though God know us well enough and though Saints try themselves, yet we have need to be tryed by affliction. There is a mystery of iniquity as well as there is a mystery of godliness, oftentimes in affliction there is something discovered to us, which for all our



search of our selves we could not have found out, nor have believed had been in us : like a pool troubled, so are our hearts in affliction, there comes up mud which we would not have thought to have been there. Yea, Secondly, As the Lord delights in the graces of his Saints, so he loves to have some occasion to commend them in his Saints, *He Still retaineth his integrity, though thou movest me without a cause against him*; See how he boasteth of Job, as a Matter when a good Scholler is examined. Therefore he loves to try by affliction, that He may have occasion to say, *O woman great is thy faith*. Thirdly, the Lord loves to discover his people to others. For, 1. By thy example, others may be encouraged; What is the end of the Lords recording the valorous acts of his Saints, their reward is full without this, but to encourage others? Yea, if thou faint in a tryal, others may be bettered by it. Why hath the Lord recorded in Scripture the failings of some of his Saints? Is it that the Lord loves to blot their names when they are gone? No certainly: but that thou may reason for thy comfort, if such a Cedar was blowen over by the wind, though I be so, I need not despair.

Thirdly, Afflictions, are called tentations, because there is no affliction, but it also hath a temptation accompanying it. And the Lord does not so try by the affliction it self, as by the temptation that accompanyes it, See *Psa. 31. 22*. And the 2 of *Jonah*, throughout. And here also I would have thir things considered.

1. That in every affliction a believer hath a double

double advantage by looking on his affliction as accompanied with a temptation: *First*, Hereby he guards against the strongest adversary he hath in his tryal; Some get the victory over the affliction that yet are taken captive by the temptation that accompanied the affliction, as all that turn aside to sinful courses to eschew the crosse are. Yea, *Secondly*, We by this guard against the greatest hazard from affliction; The least sin is worse then the greatest crosse; And if we guard against the temptation of the affliction, we are kepted from the sin that Satan by the affliction drives at, as in *Jobs* case he did at that, that he should curse God and die.

*Secondly*, Whatever be the designe of Instruments & secondary causes in our affliction, yet it is certain Satan, who uses to take the advantage of our affliction in misrepresenting God to us, designs principally that we should be overcome by the temptation of the affliction; And a believer comes bravely through his tryal, when he can say as *David*. *Pf 18.* (which *Psalm* was penned when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his Enemies, and from *Saul*, as the title of it bears. *I was also up ight before him, and I kepted me from my iniquity.* The scope and use of this point is to perswade the people of God to look aright on their afflictions as having temptations accompanying them. Ye are all fearing a cloud gathering and are ready to be perplexed with the difficulty ye forecast; But be exhorted to look most to the temptations: this warning Christ gave his Disciples when he was about to suffer, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into*

*into temptation*: he sayes not, *into affliction*, but *into temptation*; And they are guarding best against the crosse they fear, that are most in prayer, *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from all evil.*

Observat. IV. *That a believer must not only expect tentations from Satan, but from God, God tempted Abraham after these things, so Deut. 13. 3.*

I marke this point because some, if they take up a tryal under the notion of a temptation, they think it their duty presently to lay it aside. It is true, if it lead to sin, it is wisdom to do so; but if it tend to discovery of sin or grace, that is not thy duty. I shall not insist on this point, only offer three characters, how ye may discern betwixt tentations from God and from Satan.

*First*, Usually God in his temptation assaults most the outward man, some duty that is heavy to the flesh, as to *Job*, *David*, and others, whom he tempted, and here to *Abraham*. It is true, Satan sometimes assaults the body, but then as some Archers he seems to look one way and shoots another, his attempt is against the Spirit principally, *curse God and die*, he barks only at the outward man, but his bite is deeper, as in *Peter*, he winnowed him that he might deny his master.

*Secondly*, They may be distinguished by the manner of their procedour; usually when God tempts, it is to somewhat that nature loaths, as here to *Abraham* to offer his Son, his only Son: Satans practick Divines say, observes what way the tree bends and shaks it that way, suit-  
ing

ing temptations to our inclination.

*Thirdly*, God alwayes attains his end that he tempts for, if discovery of grace, or of weak-ness, or corruption, or what else; Satan may winnow, as he did *Peter*, and yet his faith not fail.

But that I may come to the last Observation I purpose a little more largely to insist upon, it is one which I find both Popish and Protestant Interpreters on the place, take notice of, partly out of Scripture, and partly out of some Jewish Doctors, *Abraham* had ten tryals before, as, To forsake his Country; To flee again and again, to *Egypt*, and *Abimelich*, where his life was in hazard; He had controversies with his friends; as with *Lot*, for wells; division in his Family, *Sarah* and *Hagar*, and their Children wrangling, He was put to wrestle with four Kings for *Lot*, and many such; Yet none of these goes under the name of temptation, till it come to this, the offering up of *Isaac* then God tempted *Abraham*, not before, notwithstanding of all these tryals, and so this affords us a new foundation for that Observation I will insist a little upon.

*Observat. V. That though the Lord often exercise his people with lesser tryals, yet he usually reserves some great one for them, that may be fully called a temptation, or, at least, after many tryals, one may be reserved for us of such a nature.*

It is often Gods way by lesser tryals to fit us for greater. I deny not but sometimes he will measure out to some of his people their difficulty

ty by smalls, tender plants a flood together would drown them, which being distilled by drops makes them grow and prosper. But often with others, this is his way by lesser tryals to prepare them for greater, *Revel. 3. 10. I will keep thee in the hour of tentation*, that seems to relat to some signal tryal, which by a special designation may go under the name of a tentation.

I will not go to search after reasons of this, how it may make for his honour, and how his peoples case may sometimes require it should be so. Only I shall enquire what should be the ingredients of which a tryal is composed when it may fitly be denominat a tentation; & in searching this I shall confine my self to this tryal of *Abrahams*, in which, as learned interpreters observe, there was a threefold assault on *Abraham* all at once, 1. On his *faith*.

*Secondly*, On his *obedience*. *Thirdly*, On his *love* to his nearest relations.

*First*, In this tentation *Abrahams* faith was assaulted. *Abraham* had received two promises in reference to *Isaac*. *In Isaac shall thy seed be called; & in thy seed shall all the Nations of the world be blessed*. And yet now at one stroke, both those promises seems to be plucked up by the root; might not *Abraham* have said what *Asaph* says in *Psal'm 77 What is become of the promise? Abrahams* faith lies nothing to lean to, but the power of God, *He knew God was able, &c. Heb 11. v. 19*

*Secondly*, His obedience is no less tryed then his faith. For 1. He is put upon a thing that was contrary to a part of the law of nature, *Thou shalt*

*shalt not kill*: Blood hath a cry, especially the nearer the relation be that sheds it, as *Abels* had when *Cain* killed him; it is the next degree to self Murder, For a Father to kill his own Sons so that *Abraham* hath not only a question about the firmness of the promise of God, and how his Command was consistent with his promise, but how it was consistent with his other commands, which by the light of nature were planted in the heart of man.

*Thirdly*, To make his tentation the greater, his love to his nearest relations is brought on the stage also. Interpreters observe on the words of the following verse to what we read, that every word hath a weight in it; *take now thy son thy only son Isaac whom thou lovest, and offer him, for a burnt offering*. How great is the love of a Father to a son; especially if he be an only Son, *Zach. 12. 10.* they shall mourn as one doth for his *only begotten*. There is weight in his name *Isaac*, which signifies laughter, that the son & the only son of his *Fathers Laughter* should be offered in a burnt offering, where all is consumed to ashes, that was a trial indeed.

Now when these three concur in any trial, that one is called to be denied to his nearest relations & to part with them, a mist also upon the understanding darkning the mind as to their duty, and when they take them to the promises as a drowning man to a bush, the bush seems to come, & they cannot see how to fasten on the promise, this makes a tryall that may fitly be called a tentation.

For, *First*, By this kind of dispensation a believer

liever comes to be scourged with twisted rods at once, as a load laid on above a burden. Job complained of his friends as cruell, that they would deal so unkindly, when Gods arrows were sticking in him, *have ye no compass on me, my friends, for the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me.* When one is put to quit with friends & promises at once, it is like the wind that fell upon all the corners of the house where Jobs children were feasting: A man in such a case is like *Israel* who had the read sea before them, Mountains on every side, & *Egypt* behind them

Beside, *Secondly*, a tryall of this nature lets in affliction to the soul. *David* complains the waters had come into his soul. So long as a tryall affects only the outward man, it is like a wound in the Arme, which proves not deadly. if the heart be not affected: but when the wound is at the heart, who can bear it. It is a pittifull account *David* gives of his case, *Psal. 116. 3. The cords of death hath compassed me about and the pains of hell took hold on me, I found trouble and sorrow: trouble from Saul, who persecuted him to death, and sorrow from the pains of hell.* Now when both a stroak on our outward condition & another on our faith comes together, *ne Hercules contra duos.*

*Thirdly*, It is usuall with man to counterbalance, any loss by any stroak of affliction by something he yet enjoys or hopes for, as the cloud of witnesses *Heb. 11.* did: If any outward loss, we use to comfort ourselves from the promises; but when these seem to yeeld, it is like an tree plucked up by the root that cuts off our hope



hope of fruit afterward. How sad is that complaint of *Asaphs*, *Psal. 77.* *In the day of his trouble, his sore rane in the night, and ceased not; I remembred God and was troubled.* When his sore is runing he thinks to find an ease by remembering God, & that failing him, his Spirit was *overwhelmed*, as a boat in a storm, for which no hope.

*Lastly*, To evidence how great a tryal this is, consider to what it hath driven many of the most excellent Saints of God, to speak unadvisedly with their lips, to reflect on God, as one become cruell unto them, as *Job* to brand his Servants the Prophets, as feeding them with lies in stead of promises as *David*; *Psal. 116* *I said in my haste all men are lyars.* *Samuel* among the rest, who had told him in Gods Name he should be King; and many such like in Scripture.

#### *Application.*

The scope of this point is to put the people of God to forecast with greater trials then any they have possibly yet met with, when thou may be put to part with thy nearest relations, and readily no small assault upon thy mind at such a time, it is true the Lord usually commands his north wind to cease in the day of the south wind, & sometimes it is other wayes; but we can lo's nothing by preparation for trials, that may fitly be called tentations. And I shall briefly shew you what encouragements he had under this tentation, and exhort you when your trials shall grow upon you, to imitat him in them.

*First,*

*First*, *Abraham* had the call of God to encounter his tentation, *God said* to him, take thy Son, thy only Son *Isaac*; as a believer is not to sit the call of God, when called to trials, nor flee from it, as *Jonah* did; so he is not to run to meet with the cros before it come, and be called to it by God, There are some that like *Goliath* think themselves able to encounter an host, who when he comes to the trial, a boy and a peible stone out of the brook will lay them one their back; the hope that *his* strength will be *ours* under a trial, is only well grounded, when not our own simplicity or folly, or pride, or unconsideratness, but his call, hath brought us under it; when his truth calls for it, he calls us. A Man that hath the call of God knowes this that whatsoever the event of his trial be, he is about his duety, and there is a great deall of peace resulting from this.

*Secondly*, *Abraham* as he had the call of God to this tentation, so he had former experience of God to this tentation, that what he called him to renounce he brought it well about in the event, He had called him to forsake his Fathers house, his countrey & kindred, to come among strangers, & there he had made him a Prince for riches & honour. Now this is very comfortable under any great tentation, when one can produce experiences of Gods way formerly to them, as *Tamar* did with *Judah*, when she was by *Judahs* command brought forth to be burnt, she brought forth the ring and the staffe, and asked whose these are; she said as much as, will the man that gave me these things  
burn

burn me. If thou say thou hast not *Abrahams* experiences of this kind against a trial; certainly thou hast not observed his way to thee if it be so; but if thou hast none of thy own, take scriptural-experiences of Gods way, and improve these under a tentation, as the Church does, *Psal. 44 Our ears have heard our Fathers tell what great things, what great things, thou didst of old.* Even these are comfortable downward to us, that we might set our hope in God, *Psal. 78.*

*Thirdly*, *Abraham* who not so much in considering what might be said against the promises God made to him, as who he was that made them. Let *Isaac* be brought to ashes, yet *Abraham* will not stagger at the promise, so long as two attributes of God remain, he judged him *faithful* that had promised, & he knew that he was *able* out of the ashes of *Isaac* to accomplish his promise. However in a tentation the promise go out of thy sight so that thou art put to say, what is become of the promise? Yet go not to doubt of it, lest thou question or deny either that God is *faithful* or that he is *able*; and O how honourable to God is it to hazard on the credit of a promise of God, which is in appearance by providence as overturned, on the account of the faithfulness and power of God. Learn then to answer the objections against them as the *Psalmist* does, *Psal. 56. 4. in God will I praise his word I will not fear what flesh can do.*

*Fourthly*, *Abraham* did shake himself loose of all the outward Impediments that might intangle him & impeded his obedience to God in this

this tentation; he told not *Sarah* of it, & as some Jewish Doctors relate, the cause of her death which followed shortly after *Abraham* came home, was the report of so strange, an attempt by *Abraham*, how then would she have taken it being told her before? Beside, *Abraham* said, at the foot of the mount, to the Servants, *abide ye here, and I and the lad will go up to the mount*; Ordinarily in tentations to which we are called, we are intangled by our too much consulting with flesh and blood, who alwayes give *Peter* his advice; but if we could shake ourselves loose of these intanglements, from all which we will shortly be loosed whether we will or not, we should be fitter for a tentation and have more cheerfulness under it.

Lastly, *Abraham* in this tentation though he could not see thorow it, yet he was very confident the event would be well ordered by God, for his comfort; it was a remarkable answer he gave *Isaac* going up the mount, when he asked him my Father where is the sacrifice, my Son said *Abraham, God will provide*, as confidently as he had seen the Ram already caught by the horns amongst the bushes: if we could, like obedient children, out of love to God follow our duty to him, we needed not be anxious what will become of this or that, it would satisfie us abundantly *God will provide*.

And indeed how dark soever this tentation was in the beginning, yet there were three things remarkable in it. Which three or one of them, may be found in the event of what tentation God shall think fit to trust thee with.

First,

*First, Abraham* had a clearer discovery of the truth of his own grace then before, by an immediate voice, *by this I know that thou lovest me*, love to Christ in us is often times like fire in flint, if the flint be not stricken upon, the fire appears not, and who knows but thou art much doubting of it at this communion, if indeed thou lovest him? But the trials for the discovery of it may be reserved.

*Secondly, Abraham* had a clear view of Christ in the Ram ready to be a sacrifice for *Isaac*, to which some interpreters think Christ relats in the Eight of *John* where he tells, *Abraham saw my day affar off and rejoiced*. And what canst thou tell but this may be the event also of the tentations thou art so much afraid of? A clearer discovery of Christ then in all thy life before. Only be content to go to the mount, if he call thee, saying *God will provide*.

*Lastly*, On the same Mount, where *Isaac* was bound, his posterity saw an starly Temple, that was one of the wonders of the world, built by *Solomon*, whereas any might have thought mount *Moriab* was the mount upon which the Church was undone in cutting off the promised seed. Yet they saw the same mount the place where the Temple did stand: So contrary are Gods thoughts often to ours, and his wayes to our wayes, that light comes out of darkness and order out of confusion, and life out of death.

S E R-

## S E R M O N I.

On JOSUA I. v. 2.

*Moses my Servant is dead.*

**T**Hese words contain *Moses's* Epitaph: In which, a description of *Moses* from his life his original, and his end. His original, *Moses*, which signifies *drawn out*; his life, *a Servant*; his end, he *is dead*.

We shall first clear the words, though not much difficulty in them.

*First*, His Original, imported in his name, *Moses*: It was given him, as we may read, *Exod.* 3. 10. because of his being *drawn out* of the water, where his Mother had laid him, in obedience to *Pharaoh's* Edict, The Lord would have his original writ on his name, that he could not so much as lay to mind his very name, but he behoved to remember that he was drawn out, for as eminent a servant as he was, as among all the Prophets of the Old Testament none was like him, yet God had him to fit for it, he found him not so, but drew him out when he was destinat to death.

The *second* thing, is his life, *My Servant*, A Servant is one who is not at his own disposal, but at the beck of another, they are as *Aristotle* calls them *zoota organa* living instruments, or tools, because they are at the will of another, to be used at their discretion, So was *Moses* but *my Servant* is an eminent eulogy, he is called so in a threefold sense: 1. By way of distincti-

distinction, and difference, some are Servants of *Sin*, serving divers lusts and pleasures, Some are Servants of *Men*, in opposition to God: some as *Rom. 16.* serve their own bellies; but *Moses* My Servant. Secondly, My Servant by way of special right and propriety, being his by election by purchase, *1 Cor. 6.* yea and by Covenant, which was made at the burning bush. Thirdly, This, My Servant, hath something of glorying in *Moses*, as when the Saints say, My God, they triumph in their portion. So when God sayes, My Servant, as *Job 1.* *Hes thou considered my servant Job.* there is a glorying in it; and this was *Moses* high Elogy, that he was not a Servant of sin, or of men, but of God.

The third particular, is, his End, *He is dead.* We have his Death, threatned, *Numb. 20.* because of his carriage at the waters of *Meribah*, and execute, *Deut. last.* where he goes up to mount *Nebo* and dyes, and is buried in the plains of *Moab.* Though He was a great Prophet, to whom none under the Old Testament come near, eminently learned in all the wisdom of the *Egyptians*, though admitted to so near communion with God, yet none of these can exeem him from the common lot of mankind, but he must die, *He is dead.*

Having thus briefly cleared the words, we shall take some observations from them, & be brief in some of them and insitt on others.

Obser. I. *That often Gods most eminent Servant, when first he finds them, he bath them to draw out of some condition very unlike their following work.*

There



Thus was it here with *Moses*, as his very name *Moses* imports. There be *three* things in this point, to which we shall speak briefly, 1. *From what* God usually draws his Servants out when he calls them to his work. Secondly, *Why* he chooles this way, to call such Servants, as he must first draw out. *Thirdly*, Apply.

In the *First*, We shal have plenty of Scripture proofes of the truth of the point, from what, to wit, he draweth them out; and here, take notice of these particulars.

*First*, Sometimes when he is about to imploy Servants, He hath them to draw out of a very low and obscure original in the World. Its true sometimes he hath called them that are honourable in the World, as *Isai*. To be a Prophet, who is supposed to be of the blood royal of the Kings of *Judah*: But here he holds, *not many Noble*, he chooes the things that are not. Thus, Christ his Apostles, a company of poor fisher-men, he made them Apostles; *Amos*, an herds-man; *David*, a Shepherd; the famous *Gregory Nazianzen* had it often objected to him by the *Arians* that he was the Son of him who was once a Begger; *Erasmus*, a Bastard, obscurely born in *Rotterdam*.

*Secondly*, He hath them to draw out from a great deal of natural simplicity and weakness in respect of moral induements: So that they may say, as *Moses*, *I am not eloquent*. It is true, some of them has been of excellent natural induements, but often otherwayes. Therefore Heathens used to draw the primitive Christians, in their portratures, with the head of

asse on their shoulders, as noting the simplicity they, saw in many of them, and yet eminent Servants, How ignorant, how timorous, and dispondent, were the Apostles, before the pouring out of the Spirit? How childish were a number of their questions to Christ and how little affrighted them? And yet what excellent instruments for Christ afterwards?

*Thirdly*, He hath drawn some out to service when their faces has been towards another airth, and their imployments lying another way in the World. It is true, *Jerimiah* is supposed to have been a priest ere called to have been a Prophet, and *Ezekiel* the Son of a Priest; But frequently he called them going at the plough, as *Elisha*; when keeping sheep, as *David*; or the cattel, as *Amos*; when fishing, he hath drawn them out and made them Fishers of Men; when commanding Armies, as the famous *Ambross* to the Bishop of *Millan*.

*Fourthly*, He hath drawn some out when ingadged in a great deal of opposition to him; they have been, as *Paul*, persecuting him, and on the way to *Damascus* drawn out, and made chosen vessels to lift up his name. How far was famous *Augustin* ingadged in *Manicheisme*, whole principals tended to deny the Being of God, and overturn his Law, and yet ingadged to be as eminent a light as any since the Apostles times: *Matthew* the Publican, the first Writter of the New Testament, and *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom he cast seven Devils, the first preacher of the resurrection; and many other proofs of this.

*Fifthly*, He hath drawn some out from under very great oppression and persecution, and made them eminent Servants. *Daniel*, a captive boy, outstriped all the *Caldeans* in wisdom and interpretation of hidden mysteries. What a great deal did many of the worthy instruments at the Counsel of *Nice* suffer for him, so that some bore the marks of their tortures, (as *Paphunitius* the want of one of his eyes) about in their bodies? Multitudes of such might be instanced, and all these will be the more remarkable, if we consider the way of the Lords drawing out in these particulars.

First, He hath made his word the mean of drawing them out to his service, when they themselves have been far from intending any such thing: *Augustin* came from *Rome* to *Millan* meerly to hear *Ambrose* his eloquence, and yet by his Sermon drawn out, though he little regarded his doctrine. *Virgerius* was set down to writ a Book *De Apostasia Germanorum*, that he might vindicat himself from the suspicion of *Lutheranisme*, and turning over *Luthers* Books, that he might answer his arguments, was drawn out to the great opposition of Popery he afterward manifested.

*Secondly*, Some drawn out by occasional unexpected providence, from which no such thing was expected. *Justin Martyr* came to behold the Martyrdom of some of the Martyrs, meerly as a gazer and looker on, and by their constancy and cheerfulness was put to search after their doctrine, and drawn out to be an eminent Servant.

*Thi. dly*

*Thirdly*, When they have only designed some bit of service to him, and to hold there, when it were done, he hath drawn them on step after step to great things: there was no more designed by *Luther* at first but to overthrow Popish *Indulgences*, but step after step he was drawn to overturn the whole body of Popish doctrine. In a word, a small lyne in his hand, is strong enough to draw out his most resolute adversaries.

The *Second* thing we proposed was *Why* God so often choosed this way? Here take notice of these three; *First*, He layes a foundation for his own praise. *Secondly*, for humbling his Servants. *Thirdly*, For confirming the truths delivered by them.

*First*, For his own *Praise*, especially of his *power and grace*. 1. His *power* shines in it, that he can take any stuffe and make a vessel of honour of it, to make a Rose grow out of a Thorne; what a great demonstration of power was it to take *Paul* on his way to *Damascus* & draw him then out? Beside *Secondly*, That demonstrates his *Grace* in the riches and freedom of it, that no native baseness, no affliction, no opposition to him, can hinder him from honouring them with his honourable service.

*Secondly*, It keeps his Servants *humble*, to remember how drawn out; *not worthy to be called an Apostle*, and why, *I persecuted the Church*. Eminent service is apt to puff up even the best, but when they look on what they were, and how drawn out, they must let their Feathers fall.

Beside, thirdly this tends to confirme the doctrine delivered by them, that when they first did begin to preach it, their faces were another way, *I was no Prophet, nor Son of a Prophet*, said Amos, and the Lord said unto me, *Go Propbesy at Bethel*: It was no design of his who was looking over his kin. What can be more rational then what *Paul* alledges in his own defence before *Agrippa* that he was once *zealous in the Jewish Religion, and persecuted Christians*, but could not be disobedient to the *Heavenly vision*.

*Application.*

By way of use briefly take these things. *First*, See the remarkable way which God hath been constantly using to build his Church. He hath not found the stones polished to his hand, which he hath been laying in his temple, but had them to hew out of a hard rock, and digg out of a pit; so much the more ought we to admire his progresse in the work; look but on the beginning of our reformation from Popery, and wonder at the instruments, that ye may ascribe the praise to the principal agent. *Luther* in a Popish cell, *Calvin* a begot Papist, *Beza* not only, a Papist but even loose, so that Papists by way of reproach objected his *Juvenilia* to him, and he forced to tell they envied to him the grace of God, and yet what done by them?

*Secondly*, This may incourage, in reference to the case of the Church for the time to come: Often we stand asking, by whom will the Lord deliver *Israel*? And where are the instruments to be found fit for the work? But cannot he, who

who drew out *Moses*, draw out; Either he can raise up new or elevat the Spirits of such as are. What a change did the pouring ontof the Spirit make on the Apostles? How boldly go they to the Temple to preach? With what confidence and freedom of speech appear they before Counsels, and witnesses for Christ? He is the same he was then who did effectuat this.

*Thirdly*, This should make us hopefully pray for either such as are most indisposed for service, or most reluctant to it, since we have to do with one who can so easily draw them out, and make them Vessels meet for his use. *Augustin* ascribed much to his Mother *Monica's* Prayers, who even when he was a *Manichean*, ceased not to wrestle with God for him.

*Lastly*, This should keep such as are honoured with eminent service *humble*; when they call to mind what once they were, and how drawn out to their work, what have the best but what they have received? And if received, why glory they of it, as though it had not been received? But I go to the *second* branch, having dwelt too long on this *my servant*, *Moses* his life and great Elogy.

Observ. II. *That it is the greatest Elogy and highest commendation of a Man after his death, that in his life he hath been Gods Servant.*

Thus it is here *Moses* his great testimony, *my servant* is dead. It is true, all the creatures are in their kind subservient, and his greatest enemies do his work. But as this is not *intentio operantis*, so it is but some fits of common ser-

vices; but to be *his* as in the explication, by way of distinction or propriety, as *Moses*, is a mans greatest elogy in death.

We shall, *First*, prove the point from Scripture. *Secondly*, Give some grounds of it, *Thirdly*, Apply it.

From Scripture, these things will prove it *First*, It is the name given to the most eminent Saints, as their Title of greatest honour; *Abraham my Servant*. *Job my Servant*, *Jacob my Servant*, *David my Servant*; The greatest Prophets & Apostles glory in it; *Paul* prefixes it to some of his Epistles, *Paul a Servant of Jesus Christ*. *Secondly*, This Name is given to the greatest Princes; *Nebuchadnezer*, Head of the Assirian Monarchy, *Jerem* 25:9. *Cyrus*. Head of the Persian, *Isai*. 45. *Thirdly*. It is given to the excellent Martyrs, *Rev*. 19. 2. *Fourthly*, It is given to the Saints in glory, *Rev*. 22. 2. *Fifthly*, To the blessed Angels. *Rev*. 19. 10. *Lastly*. To Jesus the Mediator, *Isai*. 42. *Behold my Servant whom*, &c. *Behold* all layed together prove it an eminent testimony of honour,

To evidence it further, consider that there have been many things pitched on in the world as things commending men after there death, according to the diversity of mens lives. Some have been commended for their honour, some their courage, some their wisdom, some their riches, but where a concatenation of these are, how eminently commendable must that life be And in spending the life in service to God a multitude of these concur. I shall, to demonstrat, only pitch on these five. *First*, The wisdom



dom of life so open, *Secondly*, The honourableness of it. *Thirdly*, The gainfulness of it. *4thly*. The sweetness of it. *Lastly*, The security of it. Where all these concur in the life, how deservedly is the person commended?

*First*, It is the highest wisdom. *His fear is the beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that do his Commandements.* If we should take even the rule given by *Aristotle*; whereby wisdom is discerned, all would agree to his service. *Moses* is brief in determining wherein wisdom consists, *Deut. 4. 6. Keep his statutes, for this is your wisdom.* Yea where his service is wanting, the Scripture speaks of men as fools. *Jer. 8. 9. Since they have rejected the word of God, what wisdom is in them?* They are indeed foolish Virgins who make no provision for the time to come: Though they should be able, with *Berengarius* to disput *de omni scibili*; Or with *Solomon* to unravel nature from the Cedar to the Hytop; yet he that walks not circumspectly, is a fool. *Eph 5. 16.* So that if wisdom commend a Man at death, it is a high Elogy to be his Servant.

*Secondly*, There is no trade of life so honourable, *the way of life is above to the wise.* There be four things will discover how honourable a service it is. *First*, they are taken up with the noblest objects. *Philosophers* call their Metaphisicks *scientia Nobilissima, quia tractant de ente altissima.* They are either meditating or delighting in God, or with Angels, doing his commandments. Others, with *Dioclesian*, are spending their time with fleas. But his Servants, like

*Caleb*, have an other Spirit, *Numb. 14.* constantly follow him. Secondly, They act these great things from the noblest principles, *Love* constraineth, yea by *regeneration* they partake of the divine nature, *2 Pet. 1.* which elevats the Spirit far above what the most famous among *Grecians* or *Romans* could ever reach. Thirdly, they drive at the noblest ends; such as the glory of God, *1 Cor. 6.* the good of his Church, the salvation of their own souls. Others, like men of low Spirits, have but low designs *who will shew us any good? Psal. 4.* Lastly, They receive the noblest reward; *Henceforth is laid up for me a crown of immortal glory; blessed is that servant whom his Lord shall find waiting. verily I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all that he hath;* what more can be imagined, if this be not? More, *He will gird himself, & stand, & serve him:* So that, if true honour commend a man at death, it is a high elogy then to have been a Servant to God.

Thirdly, As it is honourable, so it is truly gainful to be his Servant: *Godliness is great Gain for it hath the promises of this life, & that which is to come;* like ships that go to a far country, they keep a trade with Heaven, where they have wine, and milk, & honey, & white linnen, & eye salve, without money and without price. No sooner doth his elect Children, though prodigals before, come to their Fathers house, but they are clothed with the best robe, and fed on the fatted calfe, and have a ring on their hand, and shoes on their feet. It is true, that which usually goes under the name of riches,

riches, is not their portion, but their gain is more noble, & they lay up to themselves where the moth cannot enter; so that if riches and still to gain, can commend one's life, to be Gods Servant must be a high elogy.

*Fourthly*, As it is gainful, so exceeding pleasant, to be his Servant. We may say, as the Queen of *Sheba* of *Solomon's* Servants, *Blessed are those Servants who stand by and hear the wisdom of thy words*. This is the scope of the whole Song, to shew the delight of his Servants. Take but a view of their pleasures in these three.

1. What excellent walks they have. *Secondly*, What excellent company in these walks. *Thirdly*, What sweet fellowship with this company.

*First*, Their walks are sometimes to the Green Pastures, *Psal.* 23. sometimes to the tillages, sometimes to the gardens, to see if the pomegranats bud, sometimes to the banquetting house; It is true, they walk sometimes also down to the wildernels, *Hosea* 2. 14. ay but there they are *allured*, & a *door of hope* opened to them. 2.

What excellent company in these walks? *Enoch walked with God*, *Gen.* 6. If to walk with the Wife be, in *Solomons* eyes, so great a priviledge, what to walk with the *only wife God*? *Thirdly*, What sweet fellowship in these walks? Sometimes they sit down under his shaddow, sometimes he kisses them with the kisses of his mouth sometimes he sups with them, sometimes he takes them in his bosome; *Eesai* 40. 11. How pleasant a life must this be? The Apostle thinks nothing, *Ep.* 4. to call it *the life of God*. Others, like the elder Brother, *Luk.* 15. get never a kid

with but they delight themselves in fatness. Must it not then be a high elogy to be his Servant?

*Lastly*, They drive the sweetest life. Sathan can tell God of Job, *Hast thou not set a hedge about him, and about all he hath?* About all he hath, is much; Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? *Who is he?* It is such an expression as that of *Ahasuerus* to *Ester*, *Who is he, or where is the man, that durst presume to do this?* It is the highest act of boldness that ever the creature attempted, to be a persecuter of them who have salvation for wals and bulwarks, & are shaltered under the faithfulness of God, as a bird under the Feathers of the Dam, *Psal. 71*. Lay all together & see if it be not a high elogy to be his Servant.

*Application.*

*First*, Is it so great a priviledge to be his Servant? It reproves the undervaluers of it. Many cast at it as a bondage, even of such who call him Master and Lord, but the lowest employments in his service, *David* preferred it to a dwelling in the tents of wickedness. Some, like *Canaan*, are Servant of Servants, and despise their own mercy. Rectify thy opinion of his service, since it is the honour of Angels, who are often in the Scriptures denominat from their service, then their natures, though most pure and excellent Spirits.

*Secondly*, Is it such a priviledge to be his Servant? Then study to do his service acceptably? There are these qualifications required in his Servants.

*First*. They cannot serve two Masters, for  
They

they must cleave to the one, and leave the other. Thou must give up with lusts, with Satan, the World, neither serve men in opposition to him; these oppositions casts many out of his service and with *Gedions* 22000 they returne to their tents.

*Secondly*, A Servant is not *sui juris*, but at the Beck of his Master as the Centurions, If he say to one go he must go; ye must not stand and disput your duty, his will is reason enough, though it were to suffer for righteousness sake, though it were to walk on a sea of trouble, we ought to say with *Peter*, *Master, if thou wilt bid me, I will come unto thee.*

*Thirdly*, His service must be done cheerfully, *Psal.* 110. 3. It is true, we are to serve him with reverence, and godly fear, *Heb.* 12. 28. Yet this is not inconsistent with cheerfulness. He loves not to have it wrung out of us, as service to an austere and rigorous Master, as the man who had the one talent called him; but we are to rejoice in trembling.

*Fourthly*, We must study in every thing to do him service; Servants are to obey their Masters, as the Servants of *Jesus Christ*, directing and referring to his honour, their most ordinary imployments.

*Lastly*, We must not lay stress on our service, as if it deserved our hire, *When we have done all, we are unprofitable Servants.* Yea; though he say, *well done, good and faithful Servant* yet our reply ought to be, *When saw we thee hungry, and fed thee?*

*Thirdly*, Here is consolation for his Servants:  
Their

Their priviledge is great, though their service were never so low; Especially since they are friends, als well as Servants. Yea, he that doth the will of Christ, he is his Father, his Mother, his Brother, his Sister. Rejoice in your priviledge though it should have a mixture of the crosse with it.

## S E R M O N II.

On JOSUA 1. vers. 2.

*Moses my Servant is dead.*

OFTEN the Lord makes his Servants honourable after their death, who wrestled with much opposition in their life. Here he writs *Moses* Epitaph himself. *Moses my Servant is dead.* The third particular in this discription remains, his *end*, he is *dead*.

In handling this, we shall, *First*, Consider somethings peculiar in *Moses*, his death which may yeeld us ground of very useful instruction. *Secondly*, We shal speak of death, as a common lot from which none of the most eminent Servants of God, though as eminent as *Moses*, can expect to be exeemed: *Moses is dead*.

In the *first* place, in *Moses* his death, we shal take notice of these three things very remarkable in it. 1. The *cause* of it. 2. The *manner* & *circumstance* of it. 3. Some *consequences* that followed on it. In which three, amongst other things, we shall have anotable discovery of the justice, mercy and faithfulness of God.

*First*, Take notice of the *cause* of *Moses* death,

death. Ye have it let down in the 20. of the *Numbers*, where, at *Meribah*, the people thirsting and wanting water, the Lord bids *Moses*, *verse 7. 8. Take this rod, and speak to the rock*, and *Moses smites* the rock twice with the rod, for the which the Lord threatens him, that he should not bring the congregation to the land which he had given them. This was the cause of his death, and in this I desire ye may mark these five things.

*First*, How many proofs of faithful service to God had *Moses* given, who was faithful, as the Apostle testifies; as a Servant, yet all *his former service cannot expiate this one sin*, but he must die for it. It is the way of a great many, upon commission of any sin, they think to expiate it by their former or future obedience; but though our service were as eminent as *Moses's* was, it cannot at all make a mends for one sin to God. It is good there is a cautioner, who takes all his peoples debt on him, since it is impossible for us to expiate sin, though we had never so many moral parts. (as *Moses* learned in all the wisdom of *Egypt*,) never so great a prophet, never so much zeal, or communion with God, yet all this cannot remove one sin.

*Secondly*, In this cause of *Moses* death, remark that it was not in doing any thing *contrary* to the command of God, only a doing *beside* it, he exceeded his commission and indeed; what he did might have had many appearances of reason for it. The rod had been the instrument of many miracles in *Egypt*, and at the red Sea, yea at *Rephidim* he did strick the rock with it  
and



and brought water : But since his commission was to *speak*, his *striking* was his sin, for which he must die. *So dangerous a thing it is, in things relating to God, to act without his warrant.* Some tell us, they add no corrupting additions to the word but perfecting; But, as corrupting additions is a contradiction, so perfecting are eminently reflecting both on the Law, and Law-giver. Ye may be pressed with things which will be told you are lawful because not contrary to the word : But if they be not consonant, ye are in danger of anger from him who hath forbidden all adding to his word, as well as taking from it,

*Thirdly*, Undoubtedly this sin, for which *Moses* died, was pardoned, as to any guilt which should draw any eternal punishment after it. Yea more, many friendly acts, after this smiting the rock, passed betwixt God and him, yet he must die for it. *Antinomians* foolishly tell us that the sins of the elect, being pardoned, there are no chastisements layed on for sin. Nay, *the sin which is pardoned, the person may yet be corrected for it*; as is evident here, and in *Nathans* words to *David*. *The Lord hath also put away thy sin, nevertheless thy Child shall dy.* Argue not then from a temporal chastisement, to an eternal punishment; Since the very sin which is pardoned, may yet influence sad strokes, yea and death it self.

*Fourthly*, This was but one sin of *Moses* which he acted also when his meek Spirit was provoked by a stiff-necked people, and yet it is followed by the same outward stroke, with which

which their sins, who had tempted 40 years in the wilderness, is followed; their stroke, *Pf. 95. Is not to enter Canaan*, but dy by the way; and for this one sin, *Moses* meets with the same. *It is very remarkable, how sharply the Lord will chastise a little thing in his own, when he will let others run untill their cup be full.* It is true, the sins of his elect servants have many aggravations the sins of others wants, as being acted against more light, against greater mercies, yet the thing in it self but little, in comparison of what he will pass in another. Cast not at his service notwithstanding of this; better to have our way in sin hedged with thornes, then strowed with roses. It is dreadful to have scope in sin, and when like *Balaam* in the way to *Balack*, have the Lord furyous, go.

*Fifthly, Moses earnestly prayed, Deut. 3. that the Lord would have averted this stroke. v 25. I pray thee let me go over, and see this goodly Land beyond Jordan, and that goodly Mountain, and Lebanon; said would he have been there, but there is no dealing, Let it suffice thee, speak no more of this matter,* is his answer. *How earnest will the best be for temporary mercies, and how peremptor in prayer for them when y<sup>t</sup> their prayer cast out?* It is true, a view of *Canaan*, which *Moses* had by way of exchange, declares the prayer not lost, though refused. Now in all these in *Moses* death, see how just God is in reckoning for sin, even in the best of his Saints?

But in the next place, let us take a view of his mercy mixed in herewith, in the manner of *Moses* death: which is the 2<sup>d</sup> thing proposed.

And

And here also take notice of five things.

*First*, However the Lord will have him die for this sin, yet he warnes him of it a long time before he die, yea and determines both time and place, *Goup to mount N bo and dye*. It is a great encouragment to the Saints, in their death that it comes; not on them as a thief in the night, yea and though it be not revealed to them, as to *Moses*, yet both time and place are so determined, as all their adversaries cannot alter the least circumstance, though one of them dye in his bed, another in the sea, the third in a foreign land, yet not one hair of their head falls without their heavenly Father his providence; and though secondary causes work contingently, yet the event followes necessarily, as it is decreed.

*Secondly*, Ere he die, though the Lord castise him for his sin, yet the Lord gives him a view of *Canaan* before his death, *Deut. 3. 27. Get thee up to the top of Pisgath and behold it with thine eyes*. The passage through the valley of the shadow of death, is indeed dowifome, but a view of *Canaan* will make it so lightsome, that some of the Saints have cryed out on death for his slow motions toward them, and when recovered out of sicknels, that threatned death, have half repined that they should have been within sight of the land, and yet driven back to Sea again. And wisely the Lord reserves these sights of *Canaan*, till his Saints have death to grapple with, that he may allay a little the bitter pill. & sugar it better, before they swallow it.

*Thirdly*, This death of *Moses*, it was indeed a chastis-

chastisement of his unbelief, yet withall a Reward of his faith, which he had an eye to *Heb.* 11. v. 15. When he preferred the reproach of Christ to the treasures of Egypt. *There is indeed in death something humbling to the Saints, but there is also something comfortable:* If it be a fruit of sin, and the wages of it, it is likewise the passage to glory; and the truth is, as in our life so till it end, betwixt the views of sin and glory, our joyes and sorrowes ebb and flow,

*Fourthly, Moses* death, though it proceeded from his disobedience yet it was in it self an act of obedience, the same God who bid him go down to *Egypt* and speak to *Pharaoh*, bids him now go up to mount *Nebo* & dye & he obeyes the one als well as the other, up he goes and dyes; as it is said of Christ, so may it be said of his Saints, *He was obedient unto the death*, so are they. There are some, their souls are *taken* from them, and they are carried to death, as a prisoner unto ward by the officer, but his people *give* up the Ghost, when it is called for; and as they lived obeying, so they dye.

*Lastly, Moses* in his death was careful for *Israel*, that it should prosper after he was dead; for this end he repeats the Law over again to them in the book of *Deuteronomy*, allures, and threatnes them to stedfastness in it, appoints them a successor to him, and layes his hand on *Josua*. There are two acts we find performed, by two eminent Saints, in reference to the Church after their death, and they that cannot do the one, to promote the good of it. when they are gone, may yet do the other; *Moses* leaves

leaves a written law to them to walk by: *Joseph* acts faith on the promise, *I know the Lord will visit you*, and he will have them swear to carry up his bones. If thou cannot writ books to be standing monument of the Church's duties, yet be, with *Joseph*, acting faith for the prosperity of it, upon the promise, and thus one way or another, thou may promote the good of it when thou art gone.

But in the *third* place, take a view of some consequences of *Moses* death. I shall, for brevities sake, name but these three.

*First*, The Lord takes the charge on him of burying his Servant, *Deut. last. The Lord buried him in the plains of Moab*. His care of his Saints bodies ends not with their lives. It is the Fathers will that he should lose nothing of what is given him, but takes it up at the last day, and gives it life eternal. Mark; it is not *no* man, but *no thing* of any of them given him, the body that did run, and act, and spake in his service, he casts it not off at death, as an unprofitable old Servant, but looks after it, even though the bodies should be given to be food to the fowles of Heaven.

*Secondly*, This burial of *Moses* was so secret, as no man knew of it; the common and indeed the true reason was, to prevent superstition, which readily Israel would have fallen into, with these precious relicts. If the Lord ever had intended such a high esteem of the relicts of the Saints, as some press, he had never concealed the body of *Moses*: We have reason to praise, that we are not intoxicat with the poyson

son of those who adore the creature more than the Creator, & delude the World with the forgeries of relicts, which, though true, as they are not, yet ought not to be committed Idolatry with; the Lord did here, as a wise parent, take the knife out of the child's hand, least he should cut his fingers with it.

*Lastly*, This *Moses*, though none knew what became of his body, nor where it was laid, yet we find him afterward appearing glorious on mount *Tabor*, at the transfiguration. It is in effect no matter what become of our bodies after death, since the Saints may be assured, one day to appear and be like his glorious body; let Philosophers debate where are they that are eaten by fish, and these fish eaten by men, and the bodies of these men turned into grasse, and that grasse eaten by beasts, &c. though we can no more tell what is become of them, nor *Israel* could tell what became of the body of *Moses*, it is comfortable enough, he will make them like his glorious body, by the mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself. This much for the things particularly observable in *Moses* death.

We come now in the *second* place, to speak of death, as a lot from which the most eminent servants cannot expect to be exeemed.

*Observation*, That there are none, how eminent soever, in parts, holiness, or communion with God, can expect to be exeemed from death.

Eminent was *Moses* in all these, yet *Moses* is dead; yea, see through all the Scripture from *Adam* to *Christ*, *Enoch* and *Elijah* excepted, whose

whose extraordinary translation supplied *vicem mortis*, who are exeemed from it. Neither need we insist on the reasons of this, since it is decreed for all, *It is appointed for all men once to dye* & after death, to come to judgment. Yea *Secondly*, All are interested in *Adams* sin, & so lyable to the punishments of it, which in part is temporal death. *Thirdly*, Actual sin influences this, the wages whereof is death. It is among the errors of *Socinians* to say, death is only a natural fruit of the constitution of the body. It is true, it does indeed naturally follow on it; but man being immortalized by Covenant before the fall, the loss of that priviledge makes death to him a punishment, and the wages of sin as the Apostle, *Rom. 6. last*, words it.

That which I shall insist a little on, is, to answer this *question*, Why Christ hath not restored his Saints to an exemption from death, which by *Adam's* fall they have forfaulted? *Answer*, Though Christ hath not done this, yet he hath done so much in reference to it, that the Apostle is not afraid, to say, he hath *abolished death*, & brought *life and immortality to light, by the Gospel*. We shall therefore insist a little in opening the differences betwixt the death of the Saints through Christ, and the death of others.

There be especially this threefold difference betwixt them. *1.* In respect of the persons dying. *Secondly*, In respect of death it self. *Thirdly*, In respect of the consequences of it. This *Balaam* observed, when he said, *Let my end be as their end*.

*First,*



*First*, In regard of the persons dying, the difference is great, especially in these *three*:

*First*, The Servants of God, though they dye, yet they dye in Christ, *Revel. 14. v. 13. Blessed are they that die in the Lord*: As they believed in the Lord, and walked in the Lord, & rejoyced in the Lord, so they dye in the Lord; death does not loose their union; not so with others.

*Secondly*, They dy in faith, *All these dye in faith. Heb. 11. having a good report*; They dye in faith for themselves, for the Church of God, for their relations, and in the faith of whatever promised: not so others.

*Thirdly*, They die in obedience; as Christ was obedient to the death, so their very death is an act of obedience, *Go up to mount Nebo and dye*, the doing whereof was obedience, as well as go down to *Egypt*, go in to *Pharaoh*, or such like commands as *Moses* obeyed. Not so others, their soul is *taken* from them.

*Secondly*, The difference is great in regard of death it self. Mark especially these.

*First*, Though the thing be a curse in it self, it is a blessing to the man. *Blessed are they that dye in the Lord*; the curse is not only removed, but converted, it is now a priviledge, *1 Cor. 3. last, All things are yours, and ye are Christs, whether things present, or things to come, death or life*. Here death is theirs who are *Christs*, as a Servant is his Masters, *Death is yours, and ye are Christs*.

*Secondly*, The sting of death is removed, *Cor. 15. 55. It is now as a bee that cannot sting.*

sting. *Cor. 9. 21.* It may well bumb, and make a noise, but sin and the hurtfull sting of it, is removed. It is not so with others : the sting and all remains.

*Thirdly,* The dominion of it is removed *Rom. 5. 14.* there are some, *Psal. 49.* that death shall have dominion over; not so in the Saints, Prevail it may, as they have prevailing sins, which are not reigning, so also death, which is not reigning: Now he that removes these three, may he not be said to have abolished death?

*Thirdly,* The difference greatest of all is in regard of the consequences of death. Where, 1. consider from what death liberates the Saints, 2. To what by it they are advanced.

*First,* They are taken away from the evil to come, *Eesai. 57. 1.* As *Methusaleh* was taken away before the flood: They are taken away from the vexations of Spirit at the sins of others, from the pollutions they would be in danger of readily from the persecution & oppression to come.

*Secondly,* By death they are delivered from the tentations of Sathan. Grace here may influence their not yeelding to those tentations, but it cannot deliver them from the temptation it self. On the contrary, if they are holy, the more like they are to be tempted. *Christ Job, Asaph,* & such like, most tempted; Not so others.

*Thirdly,* They are removed and delivered from the being of sin; the Dominion of it is indeed removed in sanctification, but now the being. And what a priviledge is that?

*Secondly,* Consider to what they are advanced

ed by it; to count which by particulars is impossible, the excellency of it is so great, being that which ear hath not heard, eye hath not seen, nor can it enter into the heart of man to consider. From all which it is evident, that though Christ hath not excoemed a *Moses* from death altogether, yet there is such a difference betwixt their death and other's, that in some considerable sense, he may be said to have abolished death.

I shall not insist in applying so frequently pressed a point; only, since it is the common lot of all men, let all prepare for it. Our whole life is a school wherein we should be learning to die. It is an eminent act of wisdom, *O that they were wise to consider their latter end!* Even in our garden amongst our greatest pleasures, we should be walking beside our grave, like *Joseph of Arimathea*. So live, Christian, as thou go not out like a candle, that leaves an ill smell behind it.

F I N I S.

---

The TEXTS of the preceeding

S E R M O N S.

S E R M O N I.

Ron. 2. 22. *Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege?* Pag. 7.

S E R M O N II.

Ephes. 5. 25. *Husbands, love your Wives, even as*

as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it. Pag. 23.

### SERMON III.

Jonah. I. 6. So the Shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O Sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, &c. Pag. 39.

### SERMON IV.

John 3. 29. He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom, &c. Pag. 54.

### SERMON V.

Isai. 45. 24. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength, &c. Pag. 70.

### SERMON VI, VII.

Heb. 12. 1. Wherefore seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Pag. 87. and 102.

### SERMON VIII.

Matth. 5. 20. For I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Pag. 116.

### SERMON IX.

Acts 26. 28. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. Pag. 133.

### SERMON X.

Gen. 22. 1. And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham; And he said Behold, here I am. Pag. 149.

### SERMON XI, XII.

Josua I. v. 2. Moses my Servant is dead. Pag. 166, and 180.

